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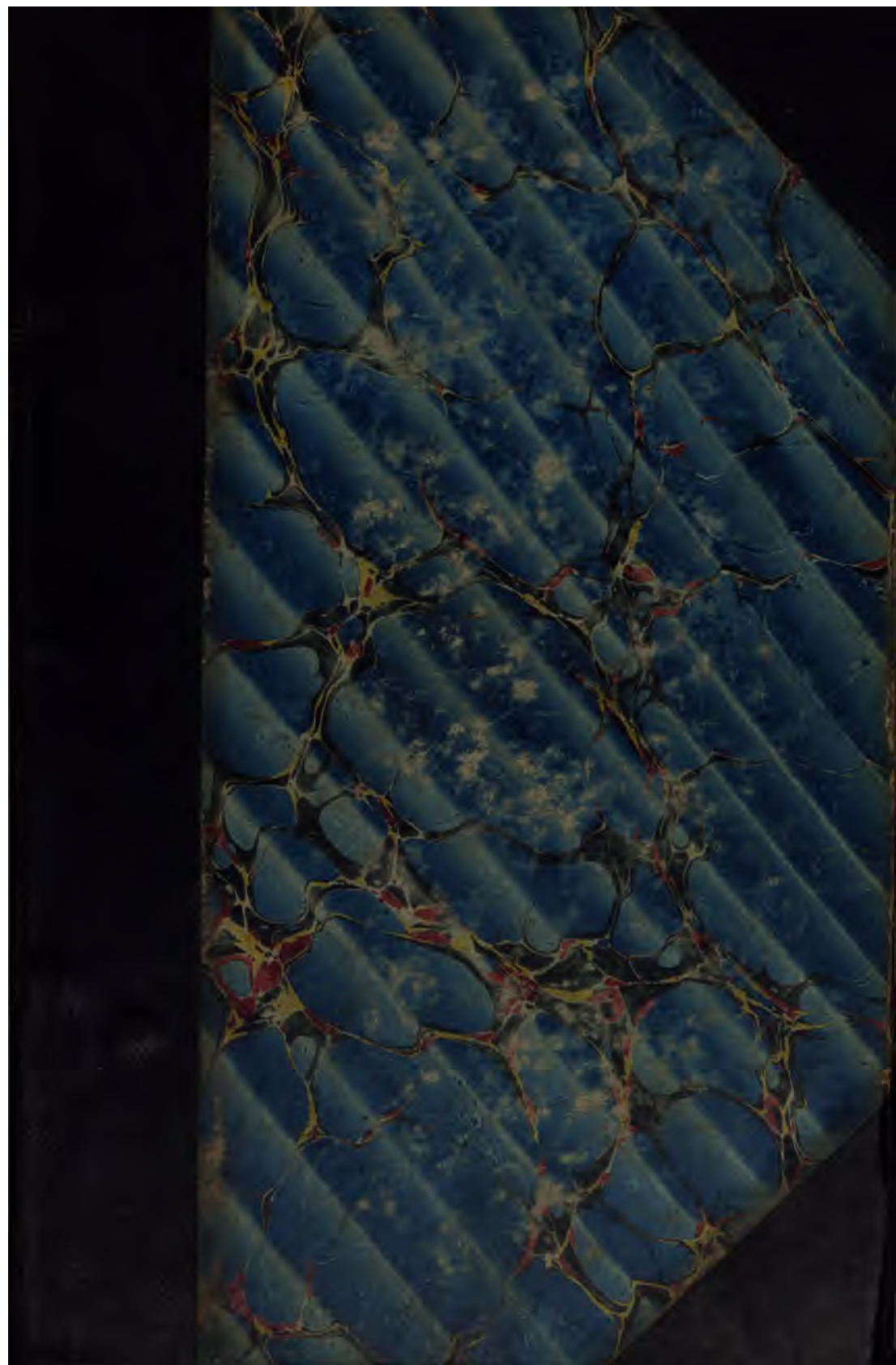
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THE PATHFINDER,

A JOURNAL

OF

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FREETHOUGHT.

CONDUCTED BY

P. W. PERFITT.

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THE CHURCH AND THE BRIMSTONE BUSINESS.

THE laws of fashion strike much deeper root than ordinary men are accustomed to believe. Many imagine that it is merely a matter of dress, dinner, and dancing—a sort of God which presides over the adornments and amusements of life; but having nothing to do with either business or religion. This is a ‘popular error’ for the sceptre of fashion is wielded over the counter and the desk quite as successfully as in the ball-rooms of the West End. There is as much done according to the fashion in Cheapside as in Regent Street, the only difference being, that in the former case it is called by another name. In religion, also, fashion exerts its authority, sometimes in connection with the dress of the worshippers, and at others as determining the form and spirit of the discourses. Is there not a fashionable religious cravat so spotlessly white, and so elegantly tied? The truly ‘spiritual’ always wear them, but seldom succeed in getting them on without praying for the washerwoman. Are not the wearers quite as particular about the style of bow and the arrangement of the ends, as the attendants of Almack’s are about the arrangement of their head-furniture. How oft it happens that a ‘spiritual’ ‘young man’ is late at church through not not having been able to get his cravat tied! Here, however, we confess to the weakness of never being able to look upon those pious neckcloths without mentally inquiring which was engaged the longest before the glass—the Reverend Timothy Sleek of Little Zion, or John Bowlegs the footman. The neck-gear of both is elegantly arranged, but probably the footman, assisted by Betty the housemaid, beats the divine in the rapid movement of his fingers.

It is not to that, however, we desire now to draw the attention of our readers, but to the power of fashion in determining the kind of doctrine which is to be preached. In our young days it was a rule among the clergy to deal largely in brimstone. Their sermons, invariably had the brimstone odour, and what they lacked in argument they made up in pictorial effects, which, for their power to influence the hearers depended largely on burning brimstone. The preacher that did not, and would not trade in this commodity, soon found his establishment deserted, for when hearers had an appetite for it there was the certainty of their going to those divinity shops in which it was supplied. But all at once, and in a very remarkable manner, which no one has yet fully

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explained, the appetite ceased, and the brimstone business sank to the lowest conceivable ebb. There were the same pulpits, the same preachers, and nearly the same hearers; but, curiously enough, the latter began to turn up their noses in a very significant manner if the odour of brimstone were introduced by the preacher. It was clearly a fact that brimstone had become spiritually unfashionable, and as the natural consequence it was very rare that a sermon was delivered in which the slightest trace of it could be discovered. As a rule preachers, like drapers, must supply precisely that sort of material which is fashionable among the congregations, and when the brimstone mania had ceased they were compelled to agree with the crowd. Some people foolishly imagine that it is the preacher who gives the law to his hearers; but a little consideration of the facts, and a peep behind the scenes into Dorcas Meetings and Scandal tea-parties, soon serves to drive that error out of the mind. They are rare men who master their congregation. The preacher must 'not offend the chief men and women in the synagogue;' and although the chosen ones are so very 'spiritual' they have enough of the old Adam left in their composition to make them love to exercise authority. These chiefs had abandoned their craving for brimstone, and hence, much to the damage of the incompetent, the sermons had to be built up without its aid. Asking a thin-minded parson to build a sermon without a dash of brimstone, is like asking a man to build and finish a house without using any paint. Through the absence of this fiery embellishment the poverty of intellect became apparent. Sermons sank to the dead level of unreadable essays, and the pews became emptier and more empty. Many a long whine was heard about the fine old fashion of preaching damnation and burning in the lake, which compelled people to attend the services; but the highly-refined members of the Churches would not tolerate the restoration of that style; many a preacher mourned over the effeminacy and false delicacy of these latter times, which prevented the liberal use of the brimstone means of grace; and, finally, as if to recall them to a sense of their condition, at one of the Congregational Conferences, it was roundly asserted that unless the preachers undertook to deal faithfully on this brimstone business with their flocks, there would soon be nobody to preach to, and consequently there would be none to pay the preachers.

Such was the condition of things when an acute young preacher, with an eye to doing a large stroke of business, undertook to deal solely in brimstone, and so unexpectedly great was the demand, that it was soon found necessary to enlarge the establishment, the business meanwhile being transacted at Exeter Hall. Crowds gathered nightly and received their supply, but, unhappily, although they had it in abundance, still, like the same thing mixed with treacle and taken in boyhood, it did not work many marvellous cures. That, however, was not a matter to vex the dealer; the demand continued to be large, and the supply never failed. But what made the business thrive so well was the peculiar happy manner of the dealer. He cracked his jokes over the seething pit; he spake of the brimstone-burning with the air of one who thought it quite a trifling matter to burn a few score thousand more or less, and with all the coolness of a North American Indian discoursing upon the sensations of the scalped, he entered into a description of what the roasted would feel. Thousands went to hear what their mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, would suffer when in the lake, and then came away to rejoice that from before the foundation of the world their own salvation had been secured.

The 'immense success' of this dealer in brimstone, especially in an age of

competition, soon operated to bring others into the same line of business, but none have succeeded so well. Mr. Spurgeon did the thing so happily that none need ever hope to obtain so large a following. His competitors give quite as much brimstone, but they cannot give it with the same unction; they are but second-class imitators, and probably there is not a man in England, except Robson, who should hope to compete successfully with the 'original revivalist' of this branch of the spiritual business. If Robson were to take Exeter Hall for 'Spurgeon imitations,' there is every reason to believe he would draw immensely, and so far as 'spiritual good' is concerned, we have little doubt that he would achieve quite as much as the original.

After 'Reginald Radcliffe, Esquire,' the latest edition of Spurgeon introduced to the London public, is the 'renowned Richard Weaver,' an 'ex-pugilist,' who began life with pommelling her Majesty's 'liege subjects, but 'dropped' that and took up the brimstone line of business, as being far more genteel and exciting. This gentleman has been introduced to London by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Noel, who, in April last, pressed his merits upon the attention of a large body of ministers and laymen, and urged that he was 'evidently raised up by the Lord to assist in rebuilding Zion.' His meetings are said to be attended by thousands of 'anxious inquirers;' but, although we have read his published 'volume of addresses,' we have not been able to make out what answers they will receive. He begins his services by singing a 'spiritual song' to the tune of 'The king of the Cannibal Islands,' or some other equally chaste composition. A few weeks back this 'servant of the Lord' held forth at Exeter Hall, and informed his hearers that "they wanted to be held over hell fire for a few minutes, and if that did not 'convert them nothing would.'" In his published discourses 'hell fire' figures very largely, and it is astonishing to read how many of his old companions are "now in hell." He knows all about their condition, and is certain that "the great majority of Londoners will be damned!" This is not very cheering, but probably our friends will be rejoiced to hear that 'Jesus is even now 'waiting to receive' Richard Weaver—collier and ex-pugilist—"into the mansions of bliss.' They are not few in number who believe that, 'the mind 'is its own place, and of itself can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven.' To such, it will be no slight source of relief, to find that all the bigots are going to one place. We have no passionate desire to spend an eternity with Spurgeon, Weaver, and Company, for unless so marvellously changed that their personal identity would be lost, they could not fail to transform a place of blessing into one of bitterness and spiritual pride, into an empire where the despotism of ignorant impudence would be triumphant,

The question has been somewhat anxiously discussed—will the hell-fire and brimstone fever continue? or are we to view it as a great but expiring effort to save the declining churches? Our answer is simply this, that all such efforts, and orations, and egotistical assumptions are ephemeral. The common-sense of the country will be outraged, and from this will come the opening for better things. The more Spurgeons and Weavers the better for the progress of freethought. He who stands for orthodox hells and brimstone lakes is the ultimate friend of liberty of thought. There are many entrances into the temple of liberty, but probably none will be more crowded than that through which they pass who have been compelled to turn away in disgust from the theology of the popular churches.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—I.

THE DARK AGES.

ONE mighty Law of Progress governs the whole Universe of God. Ever-active, never-ceasing; though slow and gradual in its processes, yet sure and constant—constant as the roll of the Ages, sure as the march of Time. To the dweller in the valley the constant onward flow of the stream may not be evident, for he sees only in part, knows only that here a stone impedes, and there an obstacle has to be surmounted; he sees only the eddies, marks the apparent retrogressions of the current, and dwells upon the petty details. But to the far-sighted vision of the watcher on the mountain-summit, who looks along the entire course of the stream, it becomes plain that that course is ever onward into the boundless ocean. Even so with the course of man's civilisation, he who studies the details only may easily arrive at the conclusion, that humanity has advanced by fits and starts, that there has been retrogression here and there, and that the progress, when made, has been by a kind of hap-hazard; but no such thought can enter the mind of him who looks along the mighty Stream of Time from off the mountain-peaks of knowledge, for to him it is very plain that there has been a constant onward progress, and that in very truth 'an increasing *purpose* runs' throughout the entire history of man and creation.

Particular ages may stand still and seem to retrogress, but they are only the eddies of the great Time-stream, and nowise affect the ultimate result. So is it with that portion of European history known as the "Dark Ages," which must be looked upon as the necessary preparation to that new and higher civilisation which was to arise out of the ruins of the Old World, and though the progress of the great stream was retarded—retarded by the course the Church took in the matter much longer than would otherwise have been—it afterwards rolled on anew, with increased force and volume, a mightier and a nobler current.

In looking along the course of universal history, there is nothing which arrests the attention of the thinking man more than the recurrence again and again of those apparent retrogressions in the shape of periodical inundations of that outer barbarism which is continually impinging on the borders of civilisation. The "Dark Ages" which followed the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, must not be looked upon as exceptional or unprecedented in the history of the world. It is true that our knowledge of them is better than of other similar periods occurring beyond the verge, or in the earliest periods, of recorded history. But that there were times in the old world, when effete civilisations were inundated and destroyed by the vigorous efforts of the surrounding barbarism, is a thing quite certain, from the monuments remaining which neither man nor time have been able to destroy.

What are those buried cities of middle Asia, and of central America? What that wondrous Cyclopæan masonry of Etruscan or Pelasgian races long since passed away? These remains and others, we might mention, all attest a high state of civilisation on the part of the peoples who created them, and who, doubtless having degenerated into that effeminacy which results from luxury, became the prey of the stronger and more virtuous barbarian. It is in fact the "Dark Ages" resulting from some such great movement upon which we come at the opening of the Drama of European history. Since then, wave after wave of barbarism has been continually rolling over Europe, impelled from the hardy North—that 'great storehouse of nations.' Goth

Hun, Frank, Lombard, Visigoth, and Vandal, and even the aged Celtic race,—what are all these? Nay, what are all the barbarian tribes which under different names have figured on the historical arena of Europe? All, originally, dwellers on the great plains of central Asia, who from various causes, in ages wide apart, have been impelled onward to seek new lands. Long ages since, how long we know not, the Celt took up his dwelling in this Europe, then came the Goth, who overran and conquered that portion of Europe now known as France. Here he became Romanised and civilised, a mighty Cæsar having no small part in the work; then, ages after, in the declining days of the Empire, the Frank came, and took up his residence in this same France. And after him in due time Lombard and Visigoth, Ostrogoth and Vandal, came and travelled nearer Rome, and into Spain; and the mediæval history of Europe began.

But beside this barbarian element, there had been another active cause at work. Priestcraft, which in the early time had seized Christianity, used it for its own vile purposes, and ultimately buried it beneath Sacerdotalism and Theology, had allied itself with the despotism of the Roman Cæsar, and created the State-Church. With a double-dyed murderer and villain for its patron, with ambition, craft and dissimulation, as the principal traits in the character of its ministers, who shall marvel that the State-Church rapidly became the curse of the Roman world? Itself enslaved the souls of the people, and lent its aid to bring them into a deeper slavery to the State; and so both in body and soul thenceforward men were enslaved. The Church, thus, instead of being, what it might have been, a grand moral influence to stay the downward progress of the ages, became only an additional element in the universal ruin. A deeper degradation fell upon the devoted Roman people; a spiritual death-palsy seized them; and at the very time when they needed spiritual guidance the most, a hireling priestly body were contending for pelf and power, setting men by the ears for their own aggrandisement, preaching what they called religion at the point of the sword, setting up falsehood in the place of truth; in short, degrading man and libelling God.

So it was the Church, assisted by the State, buried Religion out of sight, and set up in its place a sacerdotal and theological system. Or, shall we say they buried it? Say rather they attempted the impossible task, and failed in it. Ere a century had elapsed from the creation of the State-Church, morality and common sense had, in the person of Pelagius, entered its protest against the work of Priestcraft, and sought to remove the theological graveclothes in which Christianity had been attired. Pelagius opposed with all the might of his genius the doctrines of human depravity and original sin, which had now become cardinal points in the theology of the Church. He again called attention to the great principle of Christianity, that religion is not sound belief so much as a life of goodness and purity; he taught that man is his own redeemer, and that good works are not "filthy rags" and "of no account" in the sight of God. Of course this teaching was received with a howl of indignation by priests and theologians, and though for a time Pelagianism held its ground, it was ultimately overthrown. Nor was this result wonderful in a superstitious and priest-led world, and at a time when the outlying barbarism was rapidly closing in upon the Roman Empire; a time full of misery and foreboding of the future, when the minds of men were concentrated on other objects than theology, and, emasculated by the spiritual despotism under which it had lived so long, the intellect of mankind lay prostrate beneath the feet of the priest.

It was in opposition to Pelagius that Augustine, the great Church father of the West, propounded his celebrated theories of election, and reprobation, and salvation by faith, in which lay the after Calvinisms and other developments of doctrine which still form the stronghold of Priestcraft and the sorrow of every reasonable mind. Thus, once more, theology triumphed, and darkness ever thicker, and denser, closed down upon a world of misery. A solemn and melancholy time in the history of humanity was this which marked the last effort of reason to emancipate itself from priestly fetters, ere those dark and dreary centuries which men call the "Dark Ages" were ushered in upon a ruined and suffering world, and the Priest became supreme. But Pelagianism was not dead—"the seed was sown—to ripen in its season." Truth is a seed which, once sown, can never be destroyed: and this truth which Pelagius taught was again to reappear; but alas! to become in the hands of Priests transformed into a lie. Out of this truth the Church, afterwards elaborated the doctrine of Indulgences; and it was because a bastard Pelagianism thus served the turn of Priestcraft that the doctrine of Augustine became the creed of the Reformation. The truth of Pelagius in its purity must be worked out by a New Reformation.

Instead of educating a barbarian into a civilised humanity, the Church fettered the intellect, encouraged superstition, and gradually landed Europe in the night of the "Dark Ages." The Reformation began when mankind awoke to a sense of its degradation. Through ages the intellect struggled to regain its freedom. Many were the 'unknown heroes' who suffered for the cause of Reform, mighty were the efforts made by Priestcraft to retain its power and influence, and cruel the means used by the Church to attain this end. But that Law of Progress which bespeaks the hand of God in history was too strong for them; and men working with this law behind them, gradually sapped the foundations on which the Church of Priestcraft had reared itself. At last came Luther to give that blow to the Spiritual Despotism from which it has never recovered; but it would be most unjust to the humanity, prior to Luther's time, not to recognise the fact that they had made a preparation for him—an injustice, however, frequently committed. It will be our duty in these articles, after in the first instance briefly depicting the character and influence of the Church of the "Dark Ages," to show how the chains which Priestcraft had riveted for humanity were broken, and the Mediæval Night cleared away before the Dawning of a New Day—how the prostrate intellect of Europe shook off the lethargy of ages and commenced a new career.

In doing this, we shall often have occasion to show that true religion has been usually found without the Church; and even when it has made its appearance within it, has ever found itself ultimately in virtual opposition to it. The history of the Reformation is the record of one long war on the part of the Church with the religious spirit which sought to carry out into daily life and action the dictates of conscience, and essayed to find God without the help of the Priest. It is a gross error to suppose that the Church, in any form in which it has hitherto existed, has had anything in common with Religion, for no sooner had the Reformers of the sixteenth century set up a Church, than the war began again—with a difference however. The difference being this, that the Church was no longer in the same position as before, and the Priesthood less powerful to trample the rights of man underfoot.

JAS. L. GOODING.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS.)

§ 1.—THE BIRTH AND ITS WONDERS.

It is not difficult to defend the thesis that great men have been born to all nations, precisely at the hour when the people, through their previous efforts to make progress, were prepared to receive them—men who were competent to the task of laying the foundation stone of national life. With them lay the secret of unity; in them was vested the gift of life. Some nations, as China, with Confucius; Arabia, with Mahomet; England, with Cromwell; and France, with Napoleon, have been wise enough to accept the proffered aid, through which they lived to reap the great reward. Others rejected their great men, and, as the fruit of rejection, ruin stalked over their empires. When Cassio and Brutus resolved to assassinate Cæsar, they viewed themselves as noble patriots, about to deliver their country from the disgrace of having a monarch. But Cæsar was more than a monarch, in the ordinary sense. He was the one great citizen, who comprehended the actual condition of Rome. Had he lived, a new era had been inaugurated, and the Empire would not have sunk beneath the assaults of barbarian invaders. The conqueror of Gaul had learnt more in his travels than the philosophy of Rome could teach, but it was not to be reduced to practice; the dagger's point is not turned aside by the greatness and wisdom of its victim, and when fools wield such weapons injury alights upon their betters. These patriots acted much the same as the savages, who murdered a surgeon because he was about to amputate a mortified limb, but the sad side of the matter was that they did not heal the limb by getting rid of the surgeon.

China wisely accepted the great man whom the good Shang-te had given—yet not immediately, and not without a struggle. He was allowed to teach in various districts without molestation, sometimes even with reward, and so got the seed sown, from whence sprang the ultimate unity of that nation. Great need there was for his coming, for, without him there had been little peace and no progress for the Chinese nation. Sad, disrupted, and contentious was the land when he was born, and it seemed that no mere human power could establish the necessary harmony. But what no human arm could accomplish, what defied alike the statesman's craft, the power of the sword, and the authority of kings, was effected through the agency of thought and moral teaching. In the earliest days the Empire had been one; but mere kingship and authority could not combine and hold together many millions of men, who were spread over a great surface. Unity of thought, unity of custom, are far more powerful to that end than all the systems and swords statesmen have employed. These were absent, and thus there was no grand national unity; hence the provinces fell asunder. The Emperor enjoyed an empty title, for his territory was smaller than that of many who, in theory, were his subordinates. Like the old Emperors of Germany, he wore a title which gave him neither wealth, power, nor authority. With the petty princes lay the real authority, and not unfrequently it was in battle array against the liege lord and master. Thus, when Confucius was born, the future of his country appeared even darker than the day, when the English had encamped upon the walls of Peking, and the Emperor was compelled to fly before the barbarians.

Confucius supplied what was wanting to reconstitute the Empire, a

moral system, and standard customs; and to this hour his system stands. He is to the Chinese what Christ is to the Europeans; not, indeed, as a Mediator or a Saviour, but a centre round which they revolve, and from whence they derive their theories of life and duty. For even the Tao and Buddhist sects are deeply indebted to the Confucian system—a system they do not venture to deny, but propose to supplement. They ‘supply deficiencies’ and perfect the work of the admitted hero of the nation, for it were not safe in China either to deny or revile him. His descendants are the honourable of the land. The Chinese pay no respect to the accident of birth; they hold that a man is worthy or worthless according to what he thinks and does, without reference to how, when, or in what condition he was born; but an exception is made in favour of the descendants of Confucius, who are esteemed as in some degree superior to other Chinamen. The heads of the family are nobles, and all the descendants receive some pecuniary aid from the government. They wear a peculiar dress, and thus are known to their countrymen wherever they go. Still they are not treated as in any sense holier or wiser than others; they are not supposed to possess powers that are denied unto others, and are only distinguished from the remainder of the nation because of the general desire to hold the teacher’s memory in honour. In nearly every village, or in all towns down to the third class, temples are erected to the honour of Confucius, on which his name is carved in immense letters. It is stated that 1560 of these temples exist in the country, and that 65,000 animals, hogs and rabbits, are slaughtered in them, and offered as sacrifices every year. On his birthday, the people go with their offerings up to the temple; some carry rice, some sugar-cane, others sweetmeats, and these are placed before the tablet with an abundance of thanks; they thank him for the example he set to China, and especially for the doctrines he taught, but there are no prayers. Some of our missionaries, who are incapable of drawing the line between returning thanks and praying for guidance or aid, who believe all addresses of humanity to the spirit-world to be prayers, have represented that the Chinese worship Confucius as a god, but they who understand the wide difference between thanks and solicitation will judge them more fairly.

The day of his death is also observed through China. The Emperor, with his Court, visits the temple on that day with offerings; throughout the provinces the head man of the district imitates the Emperor, and sets an example to the people. So, too, each full and new moon sees the people entering the Confucian temples, but on these occasions rather for general worship than for special offering. It is to be remembered, too, that in none of these temples are there any statues of the sage. No likeness or image of him is erected, only a tablet, upon which is written, “Seat of the soul of the most renowned teacher of antiquity,” and it is before such a tablet in all the temples that the offerings are made. Why they abstain from raising other monuments, why they do not set up Confucian statues, we know not—they raise up the statues of his twelve apostles sometimes in the temples, but the master has no more than the simple tablet. Probably they conceive that in his case simplicity is most to be preferred, as in the dress of their Emperor. When an audience is given, the Officers of State, the Visiting Mandarins, and all who take part in the ceremony, are arrayed in splendid dresses, and the whole scene literally blazes with gold and jewelery, but the Emperor wears nothing of the kind, he appears dressed in plain brown silk without ornament, wearing a black cap, with a single pearl in front; and the people declare that

the son of Heaven is best arrayed in simple robes, ornaments being wholly superfluous. But whether this be the correct explanation or otherwise, it is certain that, although no statues are erected to his honour, there is no name so deeply revered in China as that of Confucius. Nor, indeed, is his name confined to the land of his birth.

Fortunately, the facts of this man's life are numerous and well preserved; and when we compare the various ancient writings in which he is spoken of, our sense of security in relying upon the popular biographies is increased by the harmony of all the reports. He was born in the petty kingdom of Loo, which is now known as the province of Shantung, in the year 551 B.C., 83 before Socrates, and 123 before Plato. He was not presumed to be, as some have declared, the son of a virgin, although there is somewhat connected with the matter that would appear to justify such a conclusion. His father, Shuh-leang-ho, was twice married, and by his first wife had nine daughters and one son, who was sadly deformed. He had grown old, and all his children had attained maturity, when his wife died and plunged the family into great distress. After the usual days of mourning had elapsed, the aged and infirm widower proposed to Yang-ho, the chief of Yew, to marry one—either one—of the said chief's three daughters. As in duty bound, he immediately made the proposal known, for the widower was a magistrate and a man of importance. He seems to have had no idea of deceiving or coercing his daughters, for he told them that the would-be bridegroom was of "low stature, a bad figure, "a severe temper, known to be impatient of contradiction, and very old." These were not exactly the kind of points likely to interest young ladies, or make them anxious to secure the prize. The two elder daughters answered not, but seemed by silence to decline the offer; the youngest and most beautiful made answer that she was ready and willing to marry the old man. Yew-she, now became an object of derision to her elder sisters, who jeeringly inquired, if she hoped miracles would be wrought in order that she should have a son to honour her memory and offer the ancestral sacrifices? The marriage was completed, and immediately after the bride obtained permission to make a journey to Ne-Kew, the grand mountain, on whose head sacrifices were offered. She went and fervently addressed herself, like the Hebrew Hannah, to the Giver of Life, praying that a son should be given in answer to her petitions. Ten months afterwards Confucius was born, and was looked upon as, under these circumstances, the gift of Heaven; but neither by himself, or by his followers, was it ever taught either that he was an incarnate deity, or that his birth was in any way dependent upon Heaven's action, as was taught of Fo-hi, Taou-keun, and other kings and teachers.

But, as in the case of other remarkable men, his birth is said to have been attended by many very remarkable occurrences. 'Two dragons were 'long seen to hover over the couch of his mother,' which indicated that the child would become mighty on the earth. The 'Ke-lin' (an allegorical animal which no one has ever attempted to describe) 'appeared at the entrance to 'the house in which he was born,' and its appearance was assumed 'to indicate good and honour to the new born.' This reminds us of the strange monster recorded in Eastern Christian histories as having appeared in the Nile when Mahomet was born, only in his case the appearance betokened evil to the community. But we are told that 'soft, sweet music filled the air in and around the house of birth.' The spirits were delighted that the child was born, for now 'humanity would be taught its duties, and evil would no 'longer rule,' so they made music to float around and ravish the souls of

the listeners. To complete the wonders, 'characters appeared upon his breast, to set forth that he would be a king without throne or kingdom.' About this latter fact, however, there is no little difference of opinion. Some of the learned state the matter as just given, but others declare that there 'was only an appearance' of characters upon his breast, none of which were clear enough to be read. Still they bring in the prophecy of kingship, by setting forth that the Fung-whang, an allegorical animal, appeared before the house, and thus foretold that the new-born would be a king without possessing a throne. Possibly our readers will find it quite as easy to accept one version as the other, or easier still to reject them both. We allude to these statements not as wishing to beget a belief in their truth, but merely to show how prone humanity is to surround its heroes with miraculous events, and even to this hour nineteen of every twenty Chinamen believe the story to be literally true. In addition, they believe that five celestial sages who had been warned of the wonderful birth, presented themselves at the house, and predicted the things Confucius would afterwards accomplish. It is said in some free-thinking book, that these sages were led by a very bright star, but we have not met with any Chinese authority for the statement, nor do we believe that any such exists.

The social position of Confucius was calculated to promote his progress, for he was descended from the ancient kings. The Chinese are no lovers of the European aristocratic forms, yet they are proud of being able to trace up the Confucian line to the Emperor Hoang-hi, who governed at least 2,000 years B.C., so that the descendants of this teacher can trace an unbroken descent through nearly 4,000 years. What can our ancient families do against such a pedigree? They must hide a diminished head, for a few hundred years at most is only a temptation to ridicule when contrasted with 4,000. Yet why spend a moment trying to show the absurdity of existing forms, when, as we know, the ideas upon which they were based have been long exploded, and only wait the one puff of popular anger to remove them wholly away. Yet Confucius enjoyed advantages at starting which gave him fairer opportunities than others in a lower station could ever achieve. There is the evil, and possibly, as in this case, the good of class distinctions. It is true that genius is of no sex, class, or country, but it is also true that given a large share of genius to one man in a low condition, and a lesser measure to one in a higher social grade, the man with a lesser genius will be sure to win greater laurels. In his position he commands, not merely the means of knowledge, not merely opportunities of mingling with the wise, but also an audience ready to listen whenever he wills to speak. They are there to listen because of his position, and if he have genius he will make them assemble again, because of what he has to teach them. But the man who starts with greater genius in a lower position has first to fight a hard long battle to obtain the mental means for satisfying the cravings of his soul, and then, when this is done, he must fight long and hard to obtain the ear of the public. Let any Lord to-morrow announce that he will lecture in Exeter Hall upon Cromwell, and we know the building would be crowded. But if others, who really comprehend the man, were to do this, then there would be hardly enough taken at the doors to pay bill-stickers. Thus the high genius, starting with low social rank, must wear away the best part of life in winning the position others with less genius enjoy at starting. This was a check to many of our best and noblest men, and hence a pleasure in recording the Confucian instance of freedom from such impediment.

Yet we are not to suppose that the life of Confucius was untinged with sorrow, for such, in truth, was not the case. He lost his father when only three years old, and was thus left to the care of a young mother; yet, though sorrow came, there was some compensation. The boy misses a father's care, and strength, and guidance, but there are mothers who more than compensate for what is thus lost. Mothers who can so develop native strength and attune the moral character, that when years have grown on the boy, and he takes his place amid the din of manhood's battle, he is armed at all points, and fully prepared to subdue the worst that can come. Such a mother had Confucius. She was well versed in the native tales of heroism, self-sacrifice, and grandeur of human character, and these she repeated over and over again, until the boy's mind became familiar with what was worthy, and full of hate for what was worthless and ignoble. Daily she applied herself to the task of fitting him for the pursuit of a glorious career, and when she had long been laid with the clods of the valley, her son's life bore fruit in virtue and heroism which qualified him for being a teacher of mankind.

P. W. P.

Are the Doctrines and Precepts of Christianity, as taught in the New Testament, calculated to benefit Humanity? Report of the Three Night's Debate at Liverpool, between "Iconoclast" and the Rev. J. H. Rutherford. London. Holyoake and Co., 147, Fleet Street.

ANOTHER debate, and no satisfactory result. Here is a report of how two human beings talked at each other through three evenings, without seeming to understand what all the talk was about. The Christian disputant found it to be not incompatible with his notion of truth to assert that the past progress, and the present position of England is to be attributed to the fact that its sons have possessed a knowledge of the principles of Christianity,—“to the unrestricted possession of that Book which Wickliffe opened, and for which Latimer and Ridley died, giving birth, as it did, to those eternal principles of truth, justice, wisdom, and freedom, of which Milton sung, and for the permanent establishment of which Cromwell drew his sword.”* Mr. Rutherford seems to have overlooked the awkward fact that the Royalists were as ready, and as frequent in quoting the New Testament as the Puritans were, and probably he is not aware that the majority of texts were dead against both Milton and Cromwell. They imagined themselves to be child-like, obedient Christians, but the learned Divines of the Church knew them only as “blasphemers and revilers of God's most holy word.” Had they obeyed the injunction of Jesus, ‘not to resist evil!’ there had been no Naseby or Dunbar, and probably no “Paradise Lost.” Had they obeyed the Apostle Paul, in being ‘obedient to those who were in authority,’ then England would not this day hold up her head so proudly amid the nations. We are thankful that they knew a better Gospel, and were prepared to act out its precepts.

An armed revolution cannot find its justification in the New Testament. But when a man has made up his mind to resist wrong, to draw the sword for freedom's battle, there is no knowing how many passages, by omitting their contexts, he may adapt to his purpose. He, however, who in modern times undertakes to treat the subject as one for philosophical investigation, is not at liberty to adopt their mutilations, or to put them forth as

*“ Report,” p. 34

adequate representations of the whole. The fact is, that the New Testament is not consistent with the Old, and both are inconsistent with themselves. There are passages which savour of friendliness to liberty, and others no less friendly to despotism. It gives a blessing in one text, and takes it away in another. Like all collections of books written by many hands, it cannot be made one, either in authorship or in thought. Why, then, claim it as the source of our freedom—as the mainspring of our greatness? They who inspired England in the seventeenth century read the Old and the New Testament through Greek and Roman glasses—through Greek poetry and philosophy, through Roman history and patriotism, and fancied themselves to have found in those “sacred books” what had no existence, save in the medium through which they had read them. And they who in the nineteenth century have raised us still higher in science and political life, obtained their inspiration from sources as foreign to the New Testament as the works of Jacob Boehme are to those of Auguste Comte. We strongly advise Mr. Rutherford to study history with some degree of care before using its materials; to remember that a falsehood is not changed in its nature by passing through Christian lips, and especially to bear in mind that modern Christianity has no more to do with Jesus than modern Brahminism has with the Vedas. A body of self-elected men have in both cases stepped in to give their interpretation, and to insist that no other shall be received, but the philosopher who identifies their arrogant assumptions with Christianity, disproves his claim to be considered a competent judge.

Mr. Bradlaugh replied fairly enough to the improper style of reasoning and assumptions of his Christian opponent; but he has yet to learn the truth in relation to the character and aims of Jesus. He confounds what men in our Churches have said of him, with what should be said. If he were to study the life of Jesus for himself, it is probable that, like the Irishman at Donnybrook, he would discover that he is fighting the wrong man. He knows that the Gospels are full of contradictions, which prove them to be human, and disprove the popular opinions regarding their being inspired; but he has no critical justification for assuming them to have no historical value. There are contradictions in the contemporary narratives about both Milton, Cromwell, even about Garibaldi; but if some madman asserted that they were all inspired, Mr. Bradlaugh, when he had disproved that, would not be justified in assuming also that there is no truth in any of the stories. Let him separate the two questions, and there will be some hope of his arriving at the truth. And until he learns to do justice to what is good in the Gospels, he will not be generally believed when denouncing that which is undoubtedly bad. The time has arrived when the whole truth respecting them must be brought out, and if Mr. Bradlaugh desire to aid in promoting that end, he must hold himself ready to do full justice to every noble sentiment found within them. The liberal thinker complains of the orthodox man that hitherto he has justified every Gospel statement and doctrine, because some of them are known to be true and good. But if the liberal thinker denounces the New Testament as a whole, because some of its contents are untrue and evil, he falls into an error equal in its injustice to that of which he complains. What is now demanded is, the love of truth, not the desire to gain party victories. Let the truth be brought fairly out, and there can be no reason for questioning that the triumph of freethought will be secured.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL. SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE PSALMS 'OF DAVID.'

THE too common idea that good religious poetry has never been written by any other than Hebrew Bards is quite as wide of the truth as was that of Dr. Johnson, to the effect that good religious poetry cannot be composed. He was a fine old man, very bigoted, but noble withal; a man of true soul, but unhappily so hampered by his surroundings that it only rarely happened he was able to give full expression to the deeper current of his thoughts untainted by prejudice. It is said that Sir Robert Peel was a much greater man than his public life leads the inquirer to suppose; that being so hampered by various early associations he could not give full play to his genius. This is probably true in his case, and certainly true in that of the fine old essayist. The cause for wonder lies not in his frequent failures, but in his numerous successes. That he utterly failed in his estimate of religious poetry even his most ardent admirers must admit; the marvel is that he dared to wield his pen in such a cause. If it were true that men could not compose good religious poetry, why should he have troubled himself about it, to the disgust of his friends and the annoyance of the clergy? It all lay in the fact that he would say all he thought, and that utterly regardless of consequences. For that he has our thanks. We may reject his criticism, but admire his independence. He had mistaken both the nature of poetry and of religion, two facts which will become clear to every man who reads his poetry and his moral essays, and which will easily explain the critical errors into which he fell when launching his thunderbolt against all who set down to compose religious poetry.

In his life of Waller, after expressing the hope that no pious ear will be offended, he proceeds to set forth his argument in favour of the thesis that "poetical devotion cannot often please." Thus he contends that it is possible for one who has the happy power of arguing in verse to defend the doctrines of religion in a poem because the theme "is not piety, but the motives to piety." The case, however, is quite otherwise when the subject is 'contemplative piety, 'or the intercourse between God and the soul, which cannot be poetical.' The reason why not he declares to be because "the essence of poetry is invention, "such invention as by producing something unexpected, surprises and delights. "Poetry pleases by exhibiting an idea more grateful in the mind than things themselves afford. The effect proceeds from the display of those parts of nature "which attract, and the concealment of those that repel the imagination; but "religion must be shown as it is; suppression and addition equally corrupt it, "and such as it is it is known already. Poetry loses its lustre because it is applied "to the decoration of something more excellent than itself."

It is curious that he should have commenced his attack with the statement that good doctrinal poetry can be written, for that is precisely the kind which cannot be written. No man can set the works of Jonathan Edwards to music, or make poetry out of the institutes of Calvin. Theological and partizan poetry is a misnomer. As well endeavour to write a magnificent sonnet upon the heroism of the Emperor Alexander as a noble poem upon baptismal regeneration. And it is equally curious that he wound it up with so flimsy a sophism. How is religion any nobler than poetry, in any sense superior to patriotism, or the beauties of Nature. Surely martyrdom, whether on the field as a patriot dying for the cause of liberty, or at the stake dying for the cause of free conscience, is, in itself, as much superior to poetry as religion can be. There is nothing in poetry to raise it above nature or heroism, which does not raise it equally above religion. The man who dies as a patriot must be nobler than the poet who composes his elegy. The fact is that the critic was confounding the idea of the author who

writes with the written poem. Poetry, however noble, is, after all, nothing more than the translation of deep meanings out of nature into the vernacular. It is not a new creation in any higher sense than is a book translated from the German into English. The great merit of the poet is that he is able to read the hieroglyphs of nature which others could not understand.

Johnson mistook poetry for painting; conceived of it as a sort of colouring or veneering, and evidently treated the poet as one whose duty it was to make mere deal look like mahogany. To write of it as mere deal would be altogether out of character. He knew of poets who had treated life and nature in that style. If they spake of a shepherd he must have his pipe, and the shepherdess must have her pet lamb, and be called Daphne or Chloe. They were afraid of man as God made him, and dared not introduce him into society unless he were duly painted. It needed that a Robert Burns should come into the world to sweep all those absurdities away, and to show that the 'Cottar,' as a man, without paint, was the fitting theme for song. It needed the true poet to show the vocations. How shall the coward know the hero? They who had written about men knew not manhood. They were of the school that clipped the trees into the fashion of peacocks or beehives, and other animate or inanimate forms. They believed in God's works only when mended by men, how then could they believe in man until he had been painted by the poets? Thus poetry was developed into the art of making nature decent, and men respectable and fit for lordly company. And taking that view of the matter, Johnson reached the conclusion that the poetical paint-pot could not be usefully employed upon religious topics.

He had, however, no less fatally mistaken the nature of religion. To him it was all written out and printed by authority, having been translated out of the original tongues. That which could not be found in the Bible he would not endow with the title of religion. In our age a nobler truth is taught. We know that as yet only some poor fraction of a Bible has been written, and until the poets do their work it will not be completed. It is for them to study science, history, and philosophy, so as to find out their deeper meanings for embodiment in verse. The true poet finds the words full of meaning which adequately express the truth upon any subject to which the attention of mankind has been directed. A great Homer, Shakespere, Dante, Milton, Burns, even a Byron, are capable of standing for ages as the high priests of mankind, for although they are not so named, they were religious poets. They made high truths become common property. They revealed what had previously been concealed, and although not writing in the Hebrew forms, they were nevertheless God's servants and man's instructors. Is not all truth religion? And when the ordinary man begins to meditate the mysteries of life and death, begins to speak of them, does he not become a poet?

All noble religious thoughts are thrown by the mind into the poetic form. The soul that is exalted by religious emotions feels that ordinary language is inadequate to express the current of feeling then felt to be flowing within, and seizes upon all objects of nature, art, and life, as the material symbols through which to express what common words will not convey. Every idea is thus embodied in some concrete image—is presented under the substantial form of well-known objects, which at first appear incongruous but afterwards grow into general repute. Thus the mechanical requisite of good poetry, forcible imagery, is necessitated by the peculiar greatness of the theme, and it is supplied in perfection in exact proportion to the clearness with which the thought to be expressed is internally conceived. He who feels deeply, and who sees clearly, will be the best poet, for sensibility and insight are the very foundation stones upon which all true poetry must be based. And in all those cases wherein we hear of defective utterance, let us rather say there is defective feeling or perception, for although the inner thoughts may never be adequately expressed, if the thoughts are really great they will form for themselves in the mind some such word-clothing as will cause them to be fairly recognised and honoured amongst men.

And this was as true in the early times as it is now. Indeed, in the early

days, all prayer and religious utterance were a kind of song, and what we call lyric poetry was rather the natural language of the heart than the creation of intellect, aided by art, as so many modern writers have undertaken to teach us. Poetry is the language of pure feeling, and in the early days what else but feeling dominated over the human mind? In the days of Homer the Greeks were as playful children looking with wonder upon all that passed around them, and when they spake it was not as men who had a knowledge of things, but only as those who unreflectingly perceived them. In our own youth we were all poets; some could write, and others only dream poetry, but as Time passed over us and experience crowded into the intellect, we got to see things in another light and in other moods of mind, and poetry passed from us. Reason and observation were then combined to show that our first view was false, and experience laid bare the fact, that too frequently fancy painted in the glorious hues of beauty that which was only the source of sin and shame or sorrow. It was bitter when first we became conscious of the reality of life, but good with all its pain; for how else could we have grown strong, or how else have learned for what life is worth possessing? And as with ourselves so it was in the early history of mankind. All was then poetry and imagination. Science and correct knowledge were unknown. The stars were bright and seemed to be immortal eyes which gleamed from out the abyss of space; and the sea was endowed with life, enabling it now to storm with the fury of a god, and now to play with the gentleness of a lamb. Was not thunder the angry voice of God, and sunshine, was it not His smile, brightening and invigorating all things? An air of romance was thrown over all things; but it could not last. The imagination cannot feed a people or supply what is required for growing States, and hence the poetical view of life and nature fell into sad disrepute. Politics, war, and social statics thrust themselves forward as the all important topics for discussion, and when a multitude were lashed into fury they had to be attended to. Thus work was found for the several nations, and although it cannot be supposed that they took counsel together and resolved upon a division of the labour, it is nevertheless certain that the labour was divided, for each nation worked diligently at one task, endeavoured to solve one problem in philosophy, politics, art, or religion, and died out when their labour was ended, leaving what they had proven as a priceless gift to benefit all coming generations, and as the practical experience of a people earnest after a truth.

All nations were alike influenced, and if the Hebrew gave more attention to the religious side of life and its emotions, wrote them down with greater clearness, we are not hence to conclude that therefore he naturally surpassed all the others, for such is not the truth. The Greek gave attention to the beautiful, and the Hindoo to the abstract nature of things; each had a particular work, and the Hebrew did not perform his a whit better than the others. That is altogether false teaching which exalts the work of one nation above the others; quite as false as the old notion that the heart was the most important organ in the body. Take away the stomach or the thoracic duct, and behold the heart is stricken with the palsy of death. The sciences are all equal, though one may be more interesting than another; one runs into, helps to explain, and gives vitality to all the others, and, the deeper the study, the more clearly is it perceived that they are mutually dependant. Now I hold that the relation of the Hebrew to society at large, to all history, must be viewed in precisely the same light. His work was part only of that which had to be done by mankind; he had to write down in clear language somewhat of his spiritual emotions, and to some extent to exhaust that field; but if none other than the Hebrews had preceded us, what now would be our state? Could we even comprehend with practical clearness the ideas he gave us? Should we be able to reduce them into form so as to advance our citizen life? Would there be any citizen life to lead? There lies beneath these questions the whole philosophy of history, not now to be unfolded. For how should we show, in few words, the law of order which underlies the life of a nation, giving it aptitudes, appointing functions, and otherwise determining what that nation shall be and do? It is enough for us at present to admit

the fact, that unless other nations had worked out some great principles, it would be impossible for us at the present hour to enjoy the amount of good achieved by the Jews. It is the same with humanity in this matter as with England and English heroism. Our Riddleys and Latimers were willing to die in the fire rather than be unfaithful to their convictions, and as we all know the result of their heroism is of unspeakable value; but alone it would not have blessed us. Other work and other suffering was necessary to render theirs practically available. The war of civil freedom had to be fought out as a companion of the religious; and that won, then the other was secure. So with the several nations. One wrought politically, another artistically, and so on; to the end, that a collective whole of good could be established and handed down.

According, then, to this view, it was the function of the Hebrew nation to supply the world with some eternal types of spiritual beauty, and the work was accomplished. In the Book of Psalms the whole is embodied, and lies freely open for our use; but not as though the highest attainable were there, for even higher than the highest of ancient days will be the thoughts and flights of men yet unborn. And those which are embodied there are neither all pure, nor all perfect, nor the work of one man, as we shall see this evening. The popular idea is that David wrote all the Psalms contained in the collection, and hence derived his name of the "Psalmist." Of course, as a moment's reflection will show, this idea is not sound. Turn to the one hundred and thirty-seventh Psalm, where you will read the following touching strain of sadness:—

"By the rivers of Babylon where, as exiles, we sat,
We wept when we remembered Zion. And
Our harps we hung upon the willows of the land;
Our captors in derision demanded a song.
They who had wasted us required mirth from our lips,
Saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How in a strange land could we sing the songs of Jehovah?
Oh, Jerusalem, if I ever forget thee,
Let my right hand forget its cunning;
If thee I do not ever remember.
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."

There can be no question made about this. It could not be written until after the return from the captivity of Babylon, so that its earliest date cannot be nearer to David than several hundred years. The same is true of many others; for the Psalms connected with the building and dedications of the second Temple are furnished in the collection with several of even later date. There is one of which a great deal has been made, in favour of David, containing the lines:—

"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.

I had rather stand upon the threshold of the house of my God
Than recline in luxury in the tents of wickedness."

This passage was not written by David; indeed, in the Bible itself it is called a "Psalm of the sons of Korah," which may be true; but it was not written until the times of Darius and Zechariah, and belongs to those of the return from the Babylonish captivity and the building of the second Temple.

(*To be continued.*)

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THE LAW OF CHANGE AND ITS DIFFICULTIES.

THERE is a cry of alarm in the land; men fear that the discussion of sacred topics will destroy all our religious ideas, and it is believed by thousands that the hour is at hand when for 'the safety of society' a stop must be put to all such inquiries. We do not believe in the theory that the religious ideas can be destroyed; still less that the prevailing spirit of inquiry will ultimately end in evil. We have no desire to impair the religious emotions, and are perfectly certain that the present attitude of Freethinkers will not be changed by means of any coercive force the State can bring to bear to crush their endeavours after liberty of heart and mind. Still, however, we are quite conscious of the fact that a time of fearful strife is at hand; but the nation will pass through it without either ruining its piety or marring its peace of mind. There is no chance of our being lost while we keep our faces toward the East, for kindly nature never yet refused to renew the lease of life to any nation that was brave enough to do battle for the truth.

The histories that have been handed down from ancient days are well stored with facts which may be used by the philosopher, much the same as the cheerful lights upon our coasts are used by the mariner, as beacons to warn him in steering the vessel of state from those rocks and shoals which threaten destruction. Every one of those facts is as valuable to us as a fact of the present century. It is true that humanity progresses, and true also that the nations of the nineteenth century are very differently situated to those who dwelt in Babylon, or fought the battles of Greece. Still, the characteristic features of humanity being the same in all ages, the spirit and meaning that underlie the old facts must be of great value to all generations, although probably their mere external force may become useless and even ridiculous. Greece, Rome, and Egypt are mirrors for all ages and nations, and in spirit the heroes of the three countries are examples for all time. Not that they exhausted the possible in humanity, or even reached near to the highest point of development. They lived their best, and the poorest hind of the nineteenth century may see through their lives to become nobler and better.

One of the facts embodied in those histories—a fact pregnant with lessons to be conned by all citizens who belong to a nation that is passing through

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the throes of transition—is to the effect that all serious national changes, no matter how highly beneficial, are invariably accompanied by painful excitement and serious difficulties—that they are never effected without creating much tribulation, calling forth strong passions, and seeming to threaten the dissolution of the nation. It is with nations as in the state of fever with the individual; there are hours when it seems that the sufferer is sinking fast away but the struggle over, the patient begins again to renew his health, and recover his vigour. Before the new can be raised up the old must be disunited, thrown into confusion, and shattered; but standing amid this wreck of the past there are thousands who are overcome by their fears that the future cannot become beautiful, and that society will not again be secure. There are men who desire to see good replace evil; but without incurring the dangers which accompany change. They go forth to speak their thoughts of what should be done; but immediately excitement follows upon the heels of their speech, they begin to inveigh against the follies of society, and then to withdraw themselves from the position of reformers, declaring it to be better to bear the ills we have than to hurry into others whose girth we cannot estimate. Good-meaning but mole-eyed men are they; for the greater the change proposed, the greater must be the excitement; so that at times it will appear as if the nation lie in the very jaws of death, when in truth it is only passing through the throes of a new life. The sick eagle has a sore time of it in its eyrie ere it can get the new feathers, and dash off against the hard rock the old beak to make way for a fresh one; but such is the order of Nature. Even in our childhood, how impossible it was to get the new set of teeth without the allowance of aches, pains, and fever. Nations must have their teething-times or perish, for either they must mount higher in aim and effort or sink from Nature's face as no longer capable of good.

As in this teething process, the new is silently prepared before the change is wrought, so also in nations; for the elemental parts of the new order of things are prepared in the minds and hearts of those who take active part in promoting real progress. Our own age, acknowledged to be transitional, furnishes an illustration. For some time past a body of earnest men have been very actively and noisily engaged in questioning and pulling the old to pieces. They are at work with a will, and hence the terrible gaps they have made in the old systems of theology and the formal schemes of worship. The Church with its paraphernalia of ritual and copes, of services and robes, of litanies and censers, of chaunting boys and intoning priests, has been weighed in the balances and found wanting. The entire system has been anatomised in the most painfully minute manner to find if aught of nobleness and manly worth of soul and religious spirit, remained in the body, and the report says that no trace of life could be found in any part, save in the treasury. Naturally enough, they who have believed in its vitality refuse to credit this report, and hence the efforts now being made to prove it to be false. Hence it comes that St. Paul's, the Abbey, with a few other theatres not generally used for religious purposes, are opened for evening worship, and that various of our London churches have been dusted out to be used on week-day evenings, at which even Bishops have been advertised to play a part. Through these movements it is hoped the nation will be persuaded that the Church has not sunk into hopeless decay; but the efforts are as vain as they are painful. The whole affair reminds us of a sad sight which, as one of a party, we witnessed many years ago on the Southampton Water. With light hearts we had permitted our boat to sweep down with the stream, and as the declining rays of the

sun lit up the face of the water, our minds were filled with the most pleasurable emotions. Suddenly one of the party raised the cry, 'There's a man in the water some distance ahead!' and sure enough side-face to us were the head and breast of a man who seemed to be playing familiarly with the rippling waves, for he swayed backward and forward with great ease and regularity. At first we were alarmed, for surely no swimmer would be there; and yet the alarm subsided when we saw how easily the body moved with the waters, and how gracefully it gave way to the gentle pressure of the waves. Swiftly we plied the oars, until the prow of the boat was within ten yards of a corpse, whose head and breast, through the power of corks beneath the arms, were kept above the surface. It was a hideous sight, for there was a seeming life, and yet death had triumphed. Such is the Church of our times. Its head is kept up by corks, but it has no internal vitality.

Yet to blot it out, with all the intolerance, and selfishness, and false theologies it has generated, will be a painful task. It cannot be performed without giving rise to excitement, contention, and other evil conditions; still, we have this fact for our consolation, that the evils in another form must be endured even if we avoided those associated with its overthrow. When the leg is in a state of gangrene it is dangerous to remove it, but certain death to let it remain. It will be certain death to England to permit our ecclesiastical system to continue. How can it live usefully when its roots have died out of all men's hearts? Its unpaid friends rally to its aid more because they fear the consequences of its removal, than because they believe it capable of doing good. Their fears are as childish as happily their efforts are vain. Let the dead be decently buried lest they breed diseases among the living. The Church can do no more than preserve formality and breed hypocrisy. It can gain an outward approval which gives the lie to the inward denial, but it cannot promote the growth of manhood. There are Freethinkers in its ministry, but they wear a mask, and seem to be what they are not. Better, then, to endure any agony than to become a nation of hypocrites. The evil cannot be staved off, therefore let it be dealt with manfully. And if we have to pass through great tribulation and agony; if we have to endure an amount of mental suffering such as our ancestors never dreamt of, still it is our duty to press on, saying in the noble words of Paine, If there be evil, and trouble, and war, let them come in our time, so that we may give our children the opportunity of living at peace with all mankind.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—II.

THE CHURCH OF THE DARK AGES.

We take our stand on the verge of Antiquity. It is the year, 500. Thirty years ago Rome was sacked by the Vandals; four years after that the last of the Roman Emperors was dethroned, and his place filled for a few troubled years by Odoacer, the first barbarian king of Italy. He, too, has passed away, and the rule of Theodoric the Goth is now established in Italy. Theodoric, though history calls him a barbarian, was a man of no small genius, 'a hero, a philosopher, and a statesman.' Comparing the prosperous and happy condition of the Romans under his government with their wretchedness under the Empire, comparing his equity and statesmanship with the injustice and

folly of the Emperors, we are inclined to ask, Who were the real barbarians? —the Romans, or those who conquered them? The aim of Theodoric was a noble and a wise one; he sought to fuse Roman and Goth into a new people; an aim which, if successful, would have enabled us to date from his reign the commencement of a new civilisation for Europe. The government of Theodoric was just, and the people happy; but, alas! justice and wisdom must fail in the presence of bigotry and superstition on the part of those they wish to serve. It is necessary, in estimating the Church of the Dark ages, to show how large a part her influence, and the superstition and bigotry fostered by priestcraft, had in preventing the success of the aims of Theodoric, and in producing the consequent anarchy, with the mental and moral darkness, which succeeded the destruction of the Gothic kingdom of Italy. This is the more necessary from the false teaching which is prevalent on the subject, by which the darkness and misery of the Middle Ages are charged upon the Goths and other barbarians, whereas to the Church they are mainly attributable.

Theodoric failed in making his kingdom permanent, because, by his tolerance of heretics, he roused the enmity of the Church; moreover he himself was an Arian and a heretic. The benefits bestowed by him were all forgotten in hatred for the man who refused to persecute the enemies of the Church; and the very happiness enjoyed under his government was bitter to a superstitious and bigoted people. It was not enough that he respected the religious liberty of all; as an Arian, and one who tolerated Jews, heretics, and Pagans, he was hateful to the Church and priest-led people. The Church preached, and the people conspired against him; and so, when Justinian, the Greek Emperor, made war on the Gothic kingdom, he succeeded in destroying it, because the Church and the Catholics aided him in every way possible. By thus contributing to the overthrow of the Gothic monarchy, the Church restored the reign of anarchy in Italy. The weakness of the Greeks at home prevented their establishing a strong rule in Italy, and before the arms of the Lombards, and the encroachments of the Popes, every vestige of the authority set up by Justinian was lost ere many years had elapsed. By these means all the wise aims of Theodoric were frustrated, and the designs of the Church assisted. It was now the Papacy was founded, and with the growth of priestly power and influence we mark the gradual degradation of the intelligence and morality of Europe in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, until we arrive at the time when intellect was prostrate, morality forgotten, and the priest the only teacher.

Waddington, the Church historian, states that, "In the course of the sixth century profane learning entirely disappeared, together with the means of acquiring it, and before its conclusion the office of instruction had passed entirely into the hands of the clergy."* The canon passed at a council, held in the year 529, relating to the system of education to be adopted is instructive on this point: "Let all priests" (so it runs) "receive the younger readers into their houses with them, and, feeding them like good fathers with spiritual nourishment, labour to instruct them in preparing the Psalms, in industry of holy reading, and in the law of the Lord." Thus, it was only the persons who were destined for the priesthood, (for such is the meaning of the term 'younger readers,') who were to be educated at all, and they only in 'holy reading,' and with 'spiritual nourishment.' Pope Gregory the Great, who reigned in the sixth century, and was reckoned the most learned man of his time, knew nought of secular learning; and so great was his horror of it, that on a bishop making a classical allusion, he reproved him by saying,

* Hist. Church. Library of Useful Knowledge. p. 317.

"It is not meet that lips consecrated to the praises of God should open to "those of Jupiter." How great a change had now been accomplished we may judge, when we remember that down even into the Gothic time, schools, supported by the government, had continued to instruct the youth (of Italy at least) in the various branches of civil education. But the work of the priest in the first half of the sixth century, had not only caused the final extinction of the last remnants of the ancient philosophy and learning, by the suppression of the Athenian Schools, thus preventing the Western youth from seeking in Greece what they could not find at home, but, by overturning the wise and tolerant monarchy of Theodoric, and making room for the growth of the Popedom, had destroyed all kinds of education, except the 'spiritual nourishment' before spoken of. Thenceforth ignorance flourished under priestly patronage.

The Dark Ages exhibit to us most forcibly the necessary connection existing between ignorance on the one hand, and vice and misery on the other. All the ties which bind men together in society were loosed, and society itself must have been destroyed, but for the growth of a kind of order under the name of Feudalism. This was the first attempt made to reduce the chaos into form, but the bond established by it was merely that of baron and retainer, of master and slave; it was a brotherhood among banditti, and society became divided into two great classes—oppressors and oppressed. There was plenty, perhaps happiness, in the feudal castle, but the plenty there was the result of robbery and violence practised on the poor serf; and every barony represented a kingdom perpetually at war with those surrounding it. Under this feudal system the misery of the great mass of men was equalled only by the tyranny and demoralisation of the barons and the clergy. "During the struggles of this frightful period," says Waddington, "the defence of the tower of knowledge, as heretofore its construction, was "entrusted by Providence to ecclesiastical hands, while its walls were incessantly menaced or violated by the lawless military aristocracy, which had "closely wrapped itself in ignorance, and was partly jealous and partly contemptuous of every exertion to improve and enlighten mankind." By way of commentary on his own statement, just quoted, he continues:—"We "are not surprised to observe that a condition of civil demoralisation, such as "then existed, should have been attended by corruption in every rank of the "clergy. The bishops were negligent and immoral, and the inferior orders "indulged in still grosser vices, and more offensive indecencies; and we may "be well assured that the laity were still further debased by the example of "deformities which their own turbulence had so greatly tended to create."* Most ingenious special pleading truly! We call the attention of our readers to this passage, for two reasons; first, because it contains, on the part of one who would willingly shield the Church, the full admission of the demoralisation of the clergy; secondly, and more especially, because it contains, on the part of an admitted authority, the bold statement of errors, common enough it is true, but unjustifiable on the part of a learned man, with reference to the relation of the Church to intelligence during those ages—errors, however, which are fostered by Priestcraft, in order that it may mislead the general mind, and ward off from itself the charge of having contributed to, or rather caused, the moral stupefaction and the gross immorality of those feudal times.

The statement that "the construction of the tower of knowledge," was due to ecclesiastical workmen, is one of which the merest tyro in history must

* Hist. Church. Library of Useful Knowledge. p. 319.

perceive the utter absurdity. The facts we have already cited prove, on the contrary, that it was by ecclesiastical hands that tower was destroyed. But "its defence was entrusted by Providence" to the Church. If so, we can only say, Providence made a great mistake. The intention of the writer, however, is evident, he means to say that the Church performed this trust. Such a statement may pass muster with many, from the commonly received opinion that the Church was the great conservator of learning through the Middle Ages, when all other parts of the community were utterly averse to it, and when, as Waddington says, they were closely wrapped in ignorance. But the question remains to be asked—Had they (as he states) wrapped themselves in this ignorance? had not the Church done this for them? The answer to this question is found in the fact, already proven, that the growth of ignorance closely followed the establishment of priestly authority. Therefore, even if it could be shown that the Church was the conservator of learning during this period, we should still have to say, 'Thank you for nothing! seeing that you rendered its conservation necessary.' But, in fact, there was no such conservation; and the revival of learning (as we undertake to prove to the satisfaction of our readers) came from quite other sources than the Church.

The statement, however, that the Church played an important part in this matter is frequently sought to be proved, by means of the unquestionable historical facts, that the monasteries afforded a shelter to the only men of thought those ages saw, and that the monks were the scribes who preserved and multiplied certain ancient MSS. wherein some, though a very small portion, of the literature of Greece and Rome was contained. But it should ever be remembered that these so-called men of thought were mainly reproducers of the theses and doctrines of the Church Fathers, and that they wrote in the interest of the Church, and for the priesthood. The preservation and reproduction of very inaccurate copies of some few old MSS. is an accidental, but very trivial benefit, which the monks certainly conferred,* but no use was made of the riches they contained, and it was not until the operation of causes, in which the Church had no part, that they became of any value.

It must, doubtless, be admitted that amongst the early Fathers of the Church are found many men of great learning, who took broad and independent views, and refused to be bound in the chains of intellectual slavery. But no sooner had the Church in the fourth century cemented its alliance with the State, and priests had thus become invested with power to domineer over the reason and consciences of men, than a change becomes perceptible. It is no longer truth after which Church writers and theologians seek. The aim evident in the whole of the literature of the Church, from that time down to the fall of the Roman Empire, is, to support the claims of the priesthood; and then, as we have seen, the political chaos resulting from the overthrow of the Empire afforded the means for an unscrupulous spiritual despotism to crush out all freedom of thought, both within and without the Church, nay, almost to prevent thought at all. The legends of Saints, and other similar productions, which form the literature of the period, abundantly testify to this. The "Church of the Dark Ages" kept men in the ignorance she had thus induced so long as she could, and when Europe awoke from its lethargy the only course taken by her was to oppose the movement.

JAS. L. GOODING.

* The reader may consult Berington's "Literary History of the Middle Ages" on this subject (Book vi.), and he will perceive that we have done more than justice to the monks. Berington being a Catholic is of course an unexceptionable authority.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS).

§ 2.—BOYHOOD, STUDENT LIFE, AND MARRIAGE.

THE boyhood of Confucius was passed under the eye of his mother and grandfather, Coum-tse, and all the anecdotes related of those early years tend to show how remarkably he was distinguished by those qualities most highly esteemed by his countrymen—a profound reverence for his parents and ancestors, and a passionate love for the writings of the ancient sages. As a playful boy nothing pleased him more than to collect a number of playmates of his own age, and induce them to practise the ceremonials of pious respect to their elders—bending down till their foreheads touched the floor, and when they would not consent he turned away to practise before inanimate objects. Thus early the seeds of obedience, filial love, and reverence for the wise, were cherished by him as ardently as in his latest years, when he laid it down as an everlasting law, that filial piety and respect for the wise should be esteemed as amongst the highest human virtues.

At the age of seven he entered a public school, the master being both a magistrate and governor, besides being 'a man eminent alike for probity and wisdom.' To the modern European, acquainted with the comparatively declining condition of China, it sounds strange, that at a period so remote Confucius should have been sent to a public school. The battle to be fought in Europe in the nineteenth century is educational. We are still struggling, and likely to struggle, to impress upon the governing bodies the fact that to educate the young is one of the first and cheapest duties of a State; but this truth was perceived and acted upon in China some hundreds of years before Confucius was born. The authorities of a province were bound by law to see that all the children in their district were sent to school; but they were not made masters of the schools. The ancient system still prevails. The heads of the villages, and of the districts of the cities, when about to found a school, assemble and deliberate on the choice of a master, and the salary to be allowed him. The government has no control over the appointment, but sends its examiners to every school, and if none of the boys pass, the wise men of the district look out for another master. Confucius was in no danger of being 'plucked,' for he took to study as naturally as the white bear takes to water. The great difficulty found by the master was in being able to keep sufficiently in advance of his pupil; eventually he abandoned the task as hopeless, admitting that the memory and genius of the ardent student were too great to be emulated by him.

It is related of Confucius that during his school-days he observed his grandfather, "Coum-tse, sitting absorbed in a melancholy mood, sighing both deeply and painfully. Having advanced towards him with his usual bow of reverence, the boy said, 'If I may presume without violating the respect I owe you, sir, to inquire into the cause of your grief, I would gladly do so.' 'Perhaps you fear that I, who am descended from you, may reflect discredit on your memory by failing to imitate your virtues.' The old man was much surprised at what he heard, and inquired from whom he had learned to speak so wisely. 'From yourself sir,' said Confucius. 'I listen attentively to your words, and I have frequently heard you say that a son who does not

" 'imitate the virtues of his ancestors deserves not to bear their name.' " * The old man was delighted with his grandson, and so far interested himself in promoting his fortune that at the age of seventeen he was employed in the public service. For this, however, he was well qualified. As a student he had applied himself to the study of history and politics; had mastered the classical works of his country, and had learnt the true causes of the decline and threatened fall of the minor kingdoms. He wished for public employment, not merely for the honour and emoluments it brought, but from a conscientious desire to do something towards establishing a better condition of things. Simple-minded and patriotic, he entered the service of his country, and from that hour his name, his doctrines, and his example became inseparably mixed up with the interests, the progress, and the literature of China.

The first office he held was that of a subordinate magistrate, from which he was advanced to the post of "superintendent of cattle." This office is understood to have been connected with the revenue. Many taxes were paid in kind, and therefore a trusty active man was required to manage the business. From this, 'because of his probity,' he was raised to the post of inspector of the sale and distribution of corn, at which he continued until he was in his twenty-third year, when, in order to 'mourn rightly' the death of his mother, he was compelled to surrender his office. The officials were much astonished when he commenced his public career at finding that he did nothing by deputy which he could do himself. The prevailing custom in his province was for one man to hold the office while another did the work; one had the honour and the emoluments, the other the toil and difficulty; but Confucius would not lend himself to that system. Rising early in the morning he went through the official reports, and detected the dishonesty of his inferiors—a dishonesty which was then almost as universal in China as it is at present. He, however, applied himself to the task of hunting down all offenders of that stamp, for although it was earnestly endeavoured, none of the old hands could persuade him either to leave the work to them, or to believe that robbing the state was any less a crime than robbing a private person. Here, then, was a plain honest man, who meant what he said, who believed in honesty, and who would not allow even a monarch to name his price. Frequently he came into contact with men who had grown grey in office, whose frauds had been winked at by former inspectors, who probably shared the spoil; but whenever compelled to dismiss them from their post, he did so in a manner that made even the delinquents admire the simplicity and straitforwardness of his proceedings, and rendered it impossible for them to suggest that he had any other motive than the honest desire to do the best for all.

The mother of Confucius as a woman, but especially as a Chinese woman, naturally felt interested about her son's marriage. In all countries this is an anxious topic for parents to discuss, but in China it becomes more important, in consequence of their ancestral ideas. They desire above all things to see their sons married, because if they have children there will be descendants to continue to offer the regular sacrifice to their ancestors. In Europe the young man generally takes great interest in that marriage question; he is popularly supposed to select his own bride, and correctly so as far as the working-classes are concerned, among whom it usually happens in that fashion; but not so when the monied classes are implicated. In our times, and among the higher and richer orders of society, the marriage question is approached very

* Meng-tsen. i. 4:

tenderly, and purely as a matter of business. The question, "What has she got for a marriage settlement?" is asked with perfect coolness, and with far greater earnestness than the more important one, "What sort of a wife would she make?" In China, also, it was, and still is, made a matter of business, with this great advantage over the Europeans, that they practise no sort of hypocrisy about it. They do not pretend that it is an affair of love, or talk about the 'blessings that attend the married state when two loving hearts are united,' when, in truth, as they all know, love has less than money to do with the match. Among them the matter is generally arranged without troubling the parties most immediately concerned. They are not even consulted about the bride or the marriage-day. The young man pursues his studies, thinking little of taking a wife, or of the attendant advantages;—the young woman plies her needle, and goes on with her house-work, giving no time to thoughts of who shall be her wedded lord—such at least is the common mode of stating the matter; but, can it be anything more than an idle theory? The old people manage the whole affair. Fathers sometimes through the pressure of famine find that they can buy young girls cheap for their sons; they purchase when the market is low, and rear them until old enough to be married, when they are given over with the usual ceremonies to the son. Or in cases where such cautious provision has not been made, they cast about for fitting brides, or apply to the 'go betweens,' a class of people who undertake the task of matchmaking, to find out a proper bride. After this has been accomplished the old people appoint to meet and drink a little tea together, when the matter is talked over, and the bargain is concluded. In India they give treasure with the bride, but in China they expect to receive it for the bride: she is bound by law to work for her parents; they of course sustain a loss when she is taken away, and for this loss compensation is demanded. According to the condition of the family it is given, and thus all being happily concluded, with the exception of naming the day, the condition of affairs is stated to the bridal pair, and they are ordered to prepare for the happy event. It was thus the mother of Confucius had proceeded, and when informed that a wife had been found for him, he professed himself pleased, and admitted that he was bound to obedience.

The wedding-day in China is fixed by the astrologers. The nativities of the intended couple are handed over to the wise men, who are supposed to be able to declare truly whether it will be lucky for them to marry on the proposed day; if they object to the day already named they name another, and sometimes marriages are thus postponed for months, "until the time arrives when the natal stars of the bride and bridegroom are not in opposition," and they can with safety go through the ceremonies. But the common opinion, as current now as in the days of Confucius, fixed upon the first moon in February as that of all others the most fortunate. The same idea prevailed through Europe, as our Valentine's Day clearly indicates. The Chinese have written a great deal, both in poetry and prose, in proof of this, which, however, like all other proofs in similar cases, falls far short of its aim. Sir William Jones translated several of these fragments, and as a specimen we quote two verses out of "Confucius's book of Sacred Odes"—he collected many such passages:—

"Sweet child of spring, the garden's queen,
Yon peach-tree charms the roving sight,
Its fragrant leaves, how richly green,
Its blossoms, how divinely bright!

*So softly shines the heauteous bride,
By love and conscious virtue led,
O'er her new mansion to preside,
And placid joys around her spread."*

The propitious spring day at length arrived when the student turned away from his books and his public studies; the bride was led to the bridegroom's home in grand procession, the usual abundant feast was given; long was the revelry, and long it lasted, while numerous as well as rich were the presents from admiring friends. The following year a son was born, Confucius' only child, and shortly afterwards he separated from his wife. It is impossible to explain how this came about, for the popular accounts are very contradictory. In some Missionary books the fact is stated as affording a powerful proof of how low the heathens must fall. But seeing that there were orthodox Davids and Christian Henries, we may conclude that the heathen have no monopoly on that score. Some say incompatibility of temper was the cause, but the generally accredited version is to the effect that the Sage found it impossible to pursue his studies amid family cares, and thus wedded to his books, and teaching, and public duties, he determined upon a separation. Whether this be true or not we cannot say; but the unquestioned purity of his life renders it impossible to assume that he was actuated by any low or selfish motive.

P. W. P.

PROPHECY AND THE LAWS OF NATURE,

WHEN the Freethinker discusses the Messianic and other prophecies, when he shows that none of them met the character and aims of Jesus, proves that they pointed to a great deliverer who was to exalt the Hebrew nation from the dust, and re-edify its broken throne, and relies upon the fact that the Hebrews admit no such deliverer has yet appeared—that they have not been redeemed—it is asked if he is not assailing all prophecy, and attempting to cover with disgrace that which so many deem sacred. To this question we have a complete answer. There is a truth underlying the forms of prophecy. Humanity has not been in error regarding the fact that to predict truly is possible, but only regarding the means and the instances. A science of prophecy is quite possible; but as yet we are only beginning to collect its elements into one focus. There was the possibility of a science of astronomy long ages before men began to collect its actual elements. They knew that such a science could be, but they went to their imaginations to find the materials with which it should be built up. The cardinal error was that imagination was permitted to create the facts they were to use as data in the science. There could be but one result—general delusion. A time came, however, when the real data were found, when all the idle imaginative crudities were cast away to be no more felt as checks to their progress, and since that day there has been no cessation, no positive standing still in the march of discovery, so that astronomy is now greeted as one of the positive sciences whose data are all demonstrable.

What does prophecy aim at achieving? Is it not a foretelling, a reading out in the present, of what shall be hereafter? Man sows his seed, and desires to know if there will come a good harvest. Who can tell? Surely not of this one year, but science says unto him, 'I can tell you that if you sow for forty-five years you will have thirty-five good harvests, five but indifferent

'ages, and five others much below the average.' He may refuse to believe, and rush away to some cunning woman who can 'read the stars,' and solve, as he believes, his problem. But it were wiser of him to listen to what science, with her inexorable figures, her law of averages, so forcibly prophesies. Science is the prophet of the nineteenth century, but unlike the prophets of old she works with eternal facts, while they filled up the void of ignorance with idle fancies.

Before us lies the undrained city; the courts are ill ventilated, and the homes of the inhabitants are dirty, badly lighted, and fetid. The scientific man marches through it, crying aloud so that all may hear, 'This city will be smitten by fever! this people will die!' Who are they that shall dare to dispute the truth of his proclamation? It is admitted that he weareth not the garments of the ancient prophets; that he does not preface his statement with the saying, 'Thus saith the Lord!' and yet in every sense he is a Prophet from God, who speaketh forth truth for the good of mankind quite as clearly as, and far more truly than any of those who spake in the olden times. Then, men spake as they were moved by hope and fancy—now, as they are instructed by nature and fact. And instead of devoting their lives to the study of Hebrew prophecies, instead of filling the minds of the people with this dust of the dead gathered out of ancient charnal houses, it would be better and more in harmony with their duty if our modern preachers were to apply their minds to a study of the actual verities of life, for then they would become qualified to speak with authority unto those who hail them as teachers, and could show their followers how to avoid the beginning of evils which are destructive in their courses.

There is, however, another form of prophecy, but few are they who attain to the power of its utterance. It is not supernatural, but depends upon spiritual, mental, and moral intuition. They who enter within the circle of its seers, are men who devote themselves wholly to the study of man, both as seen in history, and as he lives and moves around them. They have the courage to trample the prejudices and mere creeds of men beneath their feet, having but truth as their aim, and the good of mankind as their object. These men are the mocked, and jibed, and persecuted of all the countries and ages. But new and then they issue forth laden with a new truth, which, with deep and heartfelt conviction, they prophesy will prove an incalculable blessing to the human race. These men ponder the records of the past, seeking not the mere amusement of an hour, but to discover the deeper threads by which events are bound together; they labour to trace events through various stages up to their unsuspected causes, and, by careful comparisons, to discover the laws of God which operate to save or to destroy nations. They are the real prophets of modern ages. They give their lives for light, and abandon all the ordinary pleasures of life in order to win knowledge. They are the real guides of the nations among whom they live, and while such men continue in the land, we shall neither lack wisdom nor truth. But they cannot make things to be as they wish, and cannot redeem those who are lost. They are authorized to predict what will be, and can show us how we may secure fulfilment to their prophecies, but it is beyond their power to raise us up unless we co-operate to make their hopes and aims effectual.

The Hebrew waited for a Redeemer, and still waits, having fallen into the error of believing that great men make great nations, whereas the truth is that it is great nations which furnish all the possibilities of great men. Shakespeares would be lost among the Bojsemen, and Cromwell would be

valueless to the North American Indians. They were great men who fought with Oliver at Naseby, and until we all make ourselves relatively great there is no redemption possible. The Messiah will find a world worth redeeming before he moves to redeem it. Why should a great soul rise up to redeem those who have not, as far as was possible unto them, redeemed themselves? We can, however, all see that the Jews have been in error, in waiting instead of working; in praying to be redeemed, instead of nobly working to redeem themselves; we can all perceive that, but the lesson lying in it we do not so readily see! We do not redeem ourselves from the slavery of fashion, and the cant of sectarianism; we do not redeem ourselves from the love of banking-prosperity, the flattery of the wealthy, and many other evils equally great.

To all who live thus we prophesy that unless they change they will rot. Thousands who walk the streets of London with pride of purse and place have had all the manhood rotted out of them. They are beyond cure in this world, and while they live in it will be but digesting and counting machines. What may be possible for them in another sphere we would rather not undertake to say, farther than that we hope they may yet realise a fearless and manly life. When the potato is shrivelled and gone beyond the art of the cook to make it good for the table, the planter hides it in the ground, and behold! it renews its life in another form. It may be so with the men whose souls are shrivelled; and we will hope it, but still we doubt.

But unto those who still have hope and strength we say, Work and win your victory—be your own Messiah, and you will thus show forth gratitude for the powers with which the Highest has dowered you. And of such we may safely prophesy that they will succeed. Victory comes unto those who have deservedly battled. The band of patriots may for a time be trodden underfoot; but the hour is sure to come when the seed sown will produce its appointed harvest, and they who persevere with the right shall not ultimately fail. Such is the inevitable law. And he who will carefully read the everlasting laws stamped upon matter and man needs no higher inspiration. The truth lies above, below, and around; let us open our eyes and read this 'He is the truest prophet who patiently studies and honestly translates the actual meanings of nature! he shall not err, and shall never be put to shame.'

P. W. P.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFIT, PH. D.

THE PSALMS 'OF DAVID.'

(Continued from p. 16.)

PROPERLY speaking, the Book of Psalms is a collection of poems varying in their age, nature, aim, and authorship. There are one hundred and fifty poems of unequal length, from only two verses, as in the one hundred and seventeenth, to nearly two hundred verses, as in the one hundred and nineteenth. Some are repetitions, as the fifty-third and the fourteenth, which are copies. Others are made up out of longer ones given in other parts of the collection, and the seventieth is nothing more than the last five verses of the fortieth. Their styles are as varied as their ages, some have all the sententiousness of the earliest date, with the rugged and half-expressed ideas peculiar to all early poetry; while others are full-toned and elaborately wrought. The earlier strike us dumb, the latter woo us to silence. Some of them are sermons, evidently intended to be used by persons who were

engaged in teaching; they are reasonings in verse, and are constructed with a close attention to logic; while others, on the contrary, spurn all laws and rules, alike of art and reasoning, and strike out into the great Sea of the Unknown, as though the author had been commissioned to illumine the darkness. There is great force and beauty in many of these. Instance, the twenty-ninth:—

"The voice of Jehovah is heard above the waters,
For the God of glory speaks in thunder,
Jehovah above the great waters.
The voice of Jehovah is powerful;
The voice of the Lord is full of majesty;
The voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars,
Yea, breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.
Yea, He maketh them to skip like a calf;
Lebanon and Sirion like the young unicorn.
The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire;
The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness,
The Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh.
The voice of the Lord rendeth the oaks,
And layeth bare the forests,
And in His temple doth every one speak of His glory.
The Lord sitteth upon the flood,
Yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.
The Lord will give strength unto His people,
The Lord will bless His people with peace."

The collections may be fairly spoken of as composed of five sets put together, and never originally intended to be called the Psalms of any particular person. These five books are distinct even now, and some end with an order to the singer,—"Singer go back." Others end with what we now call the doxology. The first division ends with the forty-first, the second division with the seventy-second, where we find the words "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen. The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended." The third book contains from the seventy-second to the eighty-ninth, terminating with "Blessed be the Lord for evermore, Amen and Amen." The fourth division includes the one hundred and first, and ends "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting; and let all the people say Amen. Praise ye the Lord." The fifth division terminates with "Praise ye the Lord." Surely these marks indicate that the collections are not to be understood as emanating from one man, and, speaking critically, from a careful reading both of the Psalms and what has been written upon them by Ewald, Hitzig, and others, I do not hesitate to say that the several books were collected at various times by persons now unknown, and that not until the time of Ezra were they all spoken of as "The Psalms of David." And even then, as Davidson observes, "they were not accepted as the productions of David's pen." Like all other nations, the Hebrews used certain names as representative of fixed forms and ideas. For instance, the name of Moses was identical with law, just as in Greece the name of Solon, and in Anglo-Saxon England the name of King Alfred. Every new law in the course of time came to be spoken of as Mosaic, or as a law of Solon or Lycurgus. In the national mind these were the sacred legal authorities, and nothing would have been tolerated unless it were Mosaic or Solonical; and precisely the same took place with David and the Psalms. When dark days had come over Israel, when despotism, exile, and insult, had co-operated to destroy their nationality, happiness, and individual independence, then they looked back mournfully to the boasted days of David, who had written Psalms, and with him they blended the idea of song. Every poem was Davidical, and as with years their literature declined, instead of rising higher, the precious fragments came at last to be spoken of as the veritable productions of David, although the fact is that he could not have done more than compose a few himself and patronise other composers.

This is proved, too, by the titles attached to the several Psalms. There are thirty-four Psalms which have no title, and are, in consequence, called by the Jews "The Orphan Psalms." The remaining one hundred and sixteen have titles, and bear the supposed authors' names. Now, if we look to these in the several collections, we shall discover that not one of the five books is wholly attributed to David. In the first two books are several Psalms which are ascribed to the sons of Korah, and one to Asaph, yet these two books are generally ascribed to David. In the third book there are but seventeen Psalms, and of these only one is ascribed to David. In the fourth book, out of the seventeen, three only have inscriptions, and two out of the three are assigned to David; but in the last book fifteen are ascribed to him. In all the books a great variety of authors are named, as Moses, Solomon, Asaph, and others, but curiously enough not one is assigned to any of the greater or lesser prophets. But, as De Wette and others have suggested, it is impossible to believe that they wrote no lyrical pieces which became popular enough to be received into a national collection, for with them, more than with any other, lay the bardic power of Israel. They were the real singers and thinkers of great thoughts, and hence it is with pleasure we look upon the results of modern criticism, which, by minute analysis, has arrived at the conclusion that at least thirty were written by Jeremiah, and many others by known prophets. It is demonstrable that several of those which have titles ascribing them to David, were not written till long after his death, and were penned by Jeremiah, or some poet of his age, and hence the question arises, how many ascribed to David were really written by him. In all, there are seventy-four bearing his name, and although it has been asserted by many Hebrews and Christians that the nameless ones should be brought to his account, the general tone of criticism has been against such a proceeding, and therefore I need not take up your time in discussing it. Any one who wishes to study the matter out for himself, will easily discover the impossibility of David having written them, for it is a fact that they allude to events which did not occur until many years after his death—ranging from fifty to six-hundred years after. Thus, all that are not ascribed to him may be fairly passed over, in order that we may look unto those which bear his name, and which, in truth, are more or less objectionable. Of course, I can only now give an example, and cannot examine the whole of the seventy-four, yet the one I select is a fair specimen, and if it cannot, from internal reasons, be assigned to David, then the same must be said of nine out of every ten of those I leave unexamined.

I select the sixty-ninth, which modern criticism has assigned to Jeremiah, while the title ascribes it to David. The internal evidence is against David's claim.

"Save me O God! For the waters press in to my very life!
 I sink in deep mire, where is no secure standing,
 Into deep waters have I come, and the waves roll over me.
 I am weary of crying; my throat is parched;
 Mine eyes are wasted, while I wait for my God,
 More numerous than the hairs of my head are they
 Who hate me without having a reason.
 Mighty are they who seek to destroy me—
 Who without cause are mine enemies.
 They make me give what I took not away,
 Oh God, thou knowest my offences,
 And from thee my sins are not hidden,
 Let not them who trust in thee be put to shame,
 Oh Lord, Jehôvâh, God of Hosts,
 Let not them be confounded who through me have sought thee
 O God of Israel.
 For on account of thee do I suffer reproach,
 And shame covereth my face!
 I am become a stranger to my brethren;
 Yea, an alien to my mother's sons,

Through zeal for thy temple was I consumed
 And the reproaches of them who reproached thee fell upon me.
 When I weep and fast, that is made my reproach;
 When I clothe myself in sackcloth, then I become their by-word;
 They who sit in the gate speak against me,
 And I am become the song of the drunkards."

Personally, this is not true of David. It has been argued that it relates to the time when Absalom was in revolt against him, and he was compelled to fly from Jerusalem; but if so, why should he ascribe his suffering to the wickedness of men who hated him because of his zeal for God? It was not through that his son rose against him. He suffered no reproach because of Jehovah, but solely because of his own wickedness. The whole of what I have read relates to the sufferings of one who has been called upon to endure because of his religious ideas, and David was never placed in danger of becoming a martyr for the cause of religion.

The outlines of the condition of Israel worked into this poem, are equally untrue of the age of David. In the latter part there is a distinct recognition of the captivity and a promise of release.

"But I am poor, and sorrowful;
 May thine aid, oh God, set me on high!
 Then will I praise the name of God in a song;
 I will give glory to Him with thanksgiving,
 More pleasing shall this be to Jehovah
 Than a full-horned, and full-hoofed bullock.
 The afflicted shall see and rejoice;
 The hearts of them that fear God shall be revived,
 For Jehovah heareth the poor
 And despiseth not His people in their bonds,
 Let the heaven and the earth praise Him;
 The sea and all that move therein!
 For God will save Zion, and rebuild the cities of Judah,
 That they may dwell therein and possess it,
 Yea, the posterity of His servants shall possess it,
 And they that love Him shall dwell therein."

It is impossible that David could have written thus. They who have just founded a nation do not presuppose its slavery and redemption, but look with certainty to the continuance of that which they have established. The Davidic theme was that Jerusalem should endure for ever; that his family should continue to hold the sceptre, and that their glory should never pass away. But when this poem was written the glory had waned, and the cities of Judah had been ruined. Jerusalem had become the property of the spoiler, and they who stood up in defence of the ancient order of things were subjected to persecution. If we turn to the life and times of Jeremiah, we come at once upon a man and a series of facts which meet all the critical requirements which determine the authorship. In those unhappy days Zion had fallen, and the cities of Judah lay in ruinous heaps; the people were in captivity, and there was great indisposition on the part of the dwellers in Jerusalem to bow to the old theory, or to the prophet's theory of Jehovah. In his book of poems and narratives, we find abundant evidence to establish that he was hated, that the powerful men of the city sought his life, and that it was his apparent zeal in the cause of Jehovah and the temple which brought him into disgrace and danger. There is not a single line in the poem that fails in regard to the prophet and his times, and scarcely one which can be properly applied to David and the events in his career, and hence the fair conclusion is, that it should be called a Psalm of Jeremiah—not a Psalm of David.

That some of these Psalms may have been written by David is not to be denied, but that he wrote the best of them is not even assumed in the Bible, if we go by the authors' names attached, for they give the honour of the finest to Asaph and

the sons of Korah, and judging by the internal evidence of many, we can only assign him the second class position as a poet, which, however, when considered relatively, is a very high one. From a variety of circumstances, too numerous to be now detailed, there are reasons for ascribing the hundred and thirty-ninth to his pen, and I quote it as a specimen of his style, and as a fair sample of early Hebrew religious poetry:—

"Thou, Lord, hast search'd me out!
 - thine eyes
 Mark when I sit, and when I rise:
 By thee my future thoughts are read;
 Thou, round my path, and round my bed,
 Attendest vigilant; each word,
 Ere yet I speak, by thee is heard.
 Life's maze, before my view outspread,
 Within thy presence rapt I tread,
 And, touch'd with conscious horror, stand
 Beneath the shadow of thy hand.
 How deep thy knowledge, Lord, how wide!
 Long to the fruitless task applied,
 That mighty sea my thoughts explore,
 Nor reach its depths, nor find its shore.
 Where shall I shun thy wakeful eye,
 Or whither from thy spirit fly?
 Aloft to heaven my course I bear—
 In vain; for thou, my God, art there:
 If prone to hell my feet descend,
 Thou still my footsteps shalt attend:
 If now, on swiftest wings upborne,
 I seek the regions of the morn,
 Or haste me to the western steep,
 Where eve sits brooding o'er the deep;
 Thy hand the fugitive shall stay,
 And dictate to my steps their way
 Perchance within its thickest veil
 The darkness shall my head conceal;
 But, instant, thou hast chas'd away
 The gloom, and round me pour'd the day.
 Darkness, great God! to thee there's
 none;
 Darkness and light to thee are one:
 Nor brighter shines, to thee display'd,
 The noon, than night's obscurest shade.
 My reins, my fabric's every part,
 The wonders of thy plastic art
 Proclaim, and prompt my willing tongue
 To meditate the grateful song:
 With deepest awe my thoughts their frame

Surveys—"I tremble that I am."
 While yet a stranger to the day
 Within the burden'd womb I lay,
 My bones, familiar to thy view,
 By just degrees to firmness grew:
 Day to succeeding day consign'd
 Th' unfinish'd birth:—Thy mighty mind
 Each limb, each nerve, ere yet they were,
 Contemplated, distinct and clear:
 Those nerves thy curious finger spun,
 Those limbs it fashion'd one by one;
 And, as thy pen in fair design
 Trac'd on thy book each shadowy line,
 Thy handmaid Nature read them there,
 And made the growing work her care;
 Conform'd it to th' unerring plan,
 And gradual wrought me into man.

With what delight, great God! I trace
 The acts of thy stupendous grace!
 To count them were to count the sand
 That lies upon the sea-beat strand.
 When from my temples sleep retires,
 To thee my thankful heart aspires;
 And, with thy sacred presence blest,
 Joys to receive the awful guest.
 Shall impious men thy will withstand,
 Nor feel the vengeance of thy hand?
 Hence murd'ers, hence, nor near me stay!
 Ye sons of violence, away!
 When lawless crowds, with insult vain,
 Thy works revile, thy name profane,
 Can I unmov'd those insults see,
 Nor hate the wretch that hateth thee?
 Indignant, in thy cause I join,
 And all thy foes, my God, are mine;
 Searcher of hearts, my thoughts review;
 With kind severity purg'd
 Through each disguise thy servant's mind,
 Nor leave one stain of guilt behind.
 Guide through th' eternal path my feet,
 And bring me to thy blissful seat."

(To be continued.)

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THE POWER OF WORDS AND MOTHERS.

THE age demands new forces, and a wiser employment of the old ones. We stand in presence of a greatness of prosperity and a greatness of danger never conceived by the ancient heroes of Greece and Rome. The march of Cæsar into Gaul was viewed as a marvellous undertaking, but it dwarfs into insignificance before that of the allied armies marching into Pekin. The building a Roman amphitheatre was esteemed a wonderful work; but what was it beside our railways, tubular bridges, factories, and great warehouses? In a thousand forms we have surpassed the ancients; but there are forms of action in which we have not upheld the right, or acted in accord with the spirit of a true progress. Our mechanical has outstripped our moral progress, and our intellectual advances have not been accompanied by true social amelioration and independence. Englishmen are proud of their railways, as things of to-day, and of our titled ones as the things of yesterday. We bow to God and Mammon. We run about to see Lords and Dukes, and do not honestly set ourselves to work, to find out and help the truly noble and wise whom God has lent us for our good. We bow to the popular lie of the age, and sit down silent when our voices should be heard, fierce as the trumpet's blast, in the cause of justice. And instead of honestly setting ourselves to work to discover what evil we can cure; what growth of vice or weakness in ourselves we can strangle; what truth we can make our own; we go about looking for a little more money, a little more rest, a little more pleasure, and a little more of that commodity—popular opinion—which men persuade themselves will do as well as the truth; which we can hold without danger to our trading prosperity, and which we can utter without any danger of being repudiated by society.

We have not duly estimated the value of the old forces—not even the power of WORDS. What man knoweth their influence and authority? There are words easy to be spoken, which operate as opiates upon the mind, or as the Syren music to charm all power from the soul; words that weave a web of indolence around our actions and render them powerless for good, impotent against evil. There are other words of strength and beauty that sink into the mind, never again to be forgotten; words that fire us with love for what is noble; that rouse us to deeds of heroism, making our

hearts to leap, our blood to course so quickly, that we care not though legions be embattled against us. Through their power a new soul seems to have entered within us, and from that a power passes into our right hand, enabling us to contend successfully against the greatest odds. There are words which give new hope to hearts long crushed by despair, which impart strength to the bending knees of age, and others that furnish the light of true life to all who are beginning their earth's career. Words are things, are powers, are as armies, and as agents, which bear the seeds of victory and immortality within them. Their influence for good or evil ever goes on extending itself, and will extend. Speak but the true word, and behold darkness is dispelled, ignorance is slain, and the weak are made strong in freedom and truth.

But speak the false word, and who shall pretend to define the amount of injury inflicted? The most powerful poisons destroy life speedily enough, but there the evil ends; it was only one who partook thereof, and only one can die. Not so with the false word, for it is heard by one and repeated by him unto another, until oft enough it has travelled through a million minds to infect and disease the entire circle. It poisons all who believe, and once obtaining possession of the mind, everything, that prejudice can do in favour of old opinions, is done to prevent its expulsion. The men who desire to blight the fame of worthy men know well enough how the false word and dark insinuation will serve their purpose; and know, too, that a little activity in circulating it abroad will render it impossible for their innocent victim to destroy the falsehood. So with creeds and modes of government; the great art lies in being the first to fill the mind with ideas. Give them "charming" "little hymns" filled with the praise of established systems, and no matter how false the ideas and words, in virtue of being the first planted, they take the deepest root, and the chances are, that in nineteen cases out of every twenty all efforts to root them out will prove unavailing. Thus does the false word, like some deadly Upas tree, continue to rain down misery and deadly influences upon its unfortunate dupes.

Our readers have felt this. All of them who have won for themselves a new life of thought, and who are ready to move with the friends of humanity, have had the battle to fight between the false word and the true. Those earlier theological ideas, false and foreign to man's best interests, had woven themselves in with their very life, and it seemed as though their whole being would be dissolved when they tore them painfully away. If a man would know the evil consequences of false words, let him go on through thirty or forty years of busy life, and then wake up to discover that his theory of life has been, and is, utterly false, unreal, and evil. Well enough, in bitterness of soul, may he turn to curse the teachers who had so grossly deceived him; for having been thus late in the day before discovering the evil, how can he hope to remould and recover his life's losses?

What are men doing to prevent the repetition of the evil? What are the reformers and men of light doing in order to stay the plague? Do they inquire what should be done? Then we ask them to remember that it was their mothers who taught them religion—who gave a power to all who undertook such teaching. Let the women of England be freed from the priest, and they will no longer repeat the words that shed such a blight over the lives of the best and purest among us. Give the daughters of England a liberal education, and our progress upward is secure. The priests of all Churches are aware of that fact; hence their studied efforts to reach the female. The

Jesuits have ever held that women are the best tools the Church can use, for although their sons may not become Churchmen, they will at least have too much of mother's teaching alive in their hearts to prevent them working its absolute ruin. To get the true word of freedom spoken into the ear of youth, we must fill the mind of girlhood with the purest ideas, and train it to the side of liberty.

Thus, every parent can be a working reformer, and, Oh! ye fathers, heads of families, who have now the fair opportunity of laying the foundations upon which to rest a nobler generation, how are ye doing the work? Are ye neglecting your daughters, leaving them to a little music, dancing, and fancy stitching, as though the mere showy were all, the substantial of no value? Are ye leaving them to gather morbid views of life from French romances, sentimental dramas, and bodiless poetry, as though life were unreal, and they but shadows? Are you leaving them to become tools of the narrow-minded or selfish priest? Are they not to become mothers, with boys and girls to cluster round their knees? And how shall they stir the young souls to deeds of high daring, and actions worthy of renown, unless now schooled as beings who have minds, hearts, souls, sympathies, and genuine love for the noble—so that when life's holiest duties lie before them for performance, they may be as able, through knowledge, as they are willing by nature, to perform with profit, their allotted tasks? Train them in the realities of life, and then, if rude death should enter to strike down the mainstay of the home, they will be able, as was the mother of Washington, and the mothers of many other noble men, to supply the vacancy—so to guide the helpless ones, that virtue may be loved, and that the truth alone shall be sought, and loved, and spread abroad.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—III.

THE DAWNING OF LIGHT.

A BROAD survey of the history of Europe during the Middle Ages is sufficient to convince any unprejudiced mind that the darkness deepened, and the ignorance became ever denser, with the growth of Church power and priestly authority. As this is an important fact, however, we are unwilling to rest it merely on the arguments already adduced. The same conclusion is arrived at by a consideration of what was done so soon as the means of knowledge were obtained by Europe. A just estimate, too, of the nature of Priestcraft, forces a belief of this upon us. Its nature is to work for its own aggrandisement only, careless of the wants or the interests of mankind at large. So, as we have seen, the Church of Priestcraft encouraged and produced the era of 'intellectual blindness and dependence,' which found its culmination in the ignorance and manifold misery of the tenth century; and then, when men had retrograded into savagery, we find that priestly domination over the minds and souls of men was at its height. Out of this, however, Europe was to travel, not alone without the Church's assistance, but against its will; a new era was to be opened up, in which Reason began to assert its rights, and claim its proper pre-eminence over Authority. The question we have now to ask and answer is this: Whence came the light which enlightened Europe?

Comparisons have often been instituted between Mahometanism and Christianity, and their respective merits discussed. The fair and candid

inquirer must acknowledge that in both of them, when judged as systems, purporting to embody the entire circle of religious truth, there are weaknesses and shortcomings. Neither of them, in fact, meets all the requirements of the educated intellect, or satisfies all the aspirations of the religious soul. But looking beneath the 'anity in the one case, and the 'ism in the other, it must be admitted they contain in common a basis of eternal truth, whether more or less in either case, it is not our business now to inquire. Christianity, however, has been unfortunate, in having been developed into a system of Priestcraft, while Mahometanism owns no priests. In this lies the weakness of the one and the strength of the other, that Christianity has allowed priests to defile it, while Mahometanism recognises the grand truth, that each man is his own best priest.

It is a fact which cannot be gainsaid by the orthodox champions of the Church, nor yet explained by them, that while the religion which priests called Christianity, was fostering superstition, and bringing down intellectual darkness upon Europe, the religion of Mahomet was found compatible with the intellectual progress of the people professing it. Compare the ignorance of Europe under Charlemagne with the coeval enlightenment of Asia under Haroun al Raschid, and let it be remembered, that while Christian Europe was drifting into the intellectual night of the tenth century, the Saracens were translating the literature and cultivating the sciences and philosophy of ancient Greece. Then, let it be said, whether Mahometanism cannot reasonably lay a claim to superiority on this score; but let it also be remembered that the superiority is not over Christianity but over Priestcraft. It may be said that there are facts on the other side, and that literature and learning suffered at the hands of Mussulmen. True, most true, but they had no organised system to crush reason and destroy knowledge, whereas in the Church we find an organisation which, so long as it dared, worked to that end. So, while under priestly ministrations, Europe descended to the lowest depths of spiritual and intellectual degradation, the followers of the Prophet of Islam were becoming a civilised and scientific people. Thus, in the whirligig of Time, the strange chance turned up that Europe, where literature, learning, and science, had in former times been, if not born, at least cultivated to a higher pitch than elsewhere, now, in her degradation, received at the hands of the Saracens the means of reviving a new era of mental progress.

If we ask whence the light dawned upon the Dark Ages, we have therefore to say that it came from the East, though it reached Europe through a Western inlet. In Arabia it was that the sciences and literature of Greece found their only students during the Middle Ages; there they found their asylum when they fled before the clouds of superstition and ignorance which settled down on Europe, and with the Arabians—better known in history as the Saracens, and in the present connection by the name of Moors—they invaded Spain. Some speak of that wonderful march of an idea, with its embattled hosts—seen in the rapid conquest of the best part of Asia by the Mussulmen, followed by their invasion of Egypt, their march along the Northern coast of Africa, and their subsequent passage into Spain—as if it were the conquest of Civilisation by Barbarism, and of course Priestcraft is ever ready to instil this idea into men's minds. Nevertheless, it is utterly false. Spain, in common with the whole of what had been the Roman Empire, had, under the influence of Priestcraft, descended into barbarism. Here, in this Spain, the first schools of learning were established in modern Europe, by none other than the Moors: thence, whatever of culture was found in Europe

during the mediæval time of ignorance was derived ; thence, about the middle of the eleventh century, itinerant scholars, educated in the Moorish schools, travelled out into France, Germany, and England, and undertook the education of the youth of those nations ; and the academies which they formed were the germs whence sprang the Universities and seats of learning afterwards established in Europe. They assumed the latter form during the thirteenth century. Saracen Spain was therefore the first to apply the impulse to Europe, out of which grew the after-Revival of Learning, Literature, and Civilisation : her schools became the fountain whence a small but ever-widening stream of knowledge first flowed into Europe in these Middle Ages.

In these early schools the science and philosophy of Aristotle were the main subjects of education, and this, after the Arabian method, was kept purely secular. But could the Church look quietly on at this great movement, and allow secular education to proceed without her interference—allow, in fact, the minds of the people to be enlightened with information and learning, untinctured with Church doctrine ? Not so, Priestcraft did then what it has so frequently done,—after preventing measures of reform and progress as long as possible, when they become inevitable, it ever seeks to take the guidance of them into its own hands, and make them subserve its own purposes. So with the Aristotelian philosophy and science ; the Church would fain have prevented its influx, but as it had come she would bind it in the fetters of theology. Lest we should be thought to exaggerate in saying this, we produce orthodox testimony on the subject :—"Towards the middle of the "eleventh century," writes the Church historian, "his (*i.e.* Aristotle's) philosophy was taught, after the Arabian method, in the public schools ; and "though, in the first instance, it was confined to the illustration of profane "subjects, yet as men became commonly imbued with its principles, and as "the whole system, political and moral, in those days was interwoven with "religious, or, at least, with ecclesiastical, considerations, it was not long "before the prevalent system passed obsequiously into the service of theo- "logy."* This explains the rise and aims of the Schoolmen, who were mainly ecclesiastics, and most of them (though not all, as we shall see) used the science of Aristotle in the service of the Church, and sought to strengthen, by means of philosophy, the grounds of faith. In this way, for centuries after the first reawakening of reason, priestly fetters were kept upon men's minds ; Aristotle was pressed into the service of the Church, his science and philosophy became theological, and his memory received Christian baptism. At the time of the first establishment of the Saracen schools, the only Latin translation of any portion of Aristotle was his logic ; and so it was the art of disputation played so large a part amongst the Schoolmen. Under Church patronage (awarded for the reasons already named) the logic of Aristotle became viewed with equal reverence to the Bible itself.

The evils which were brought down upon Europe throughout those Middle Ages were mainly the work of the priest ; or were the results of causes set in operation by him for his own nefarious purposes ; while whatever of benefit to man intellectually was achieved during that period, was attained, not only without the assistance, but in spite of the Church. It would, however, be a great mistake to suppose that humanity gained nothing by means of those centuries ; the work they did was necessary to the onward progress of man. That it might and would, but for the Church, have been done differently and much more rapidly, is however quite certain. But apart from

* Waddington. Hist. Church, Lib. Useful Knowledge, p. 471.

that, the overthrow of the systems of antiquity, and the infusion of new elements into the ancient civilisation, were necessary; and this overthrow was effected, and these elements were supplied by the irruption of the outlying barbarians. Thus was a new civilisation born, and new possibilities of progress achieved. In other words, out of the mixture of the Roman, the German, and the Celt, a new man was made. While yet in his simple infancy, the Church caught this new man and made a slave of him. Another, and an alien race, the Saracens, supplied him with the first seeds of education; logic called his reasoning powers into activity, and the strife began between the Church and the awakened intellect of Europe. The Church then sought to turn logic to her own uses, but truth and the law of progress were mightier than Priestcraft; ere long she tried a sterner logic, that of the thumbscrew and the rack, but that, too, failed. Meanwhile logic was rousing men to active thought, and preparing the way for the scientific discoveries of an after time, by which the reign of Priestcraft and Superstition has been broken, and the way gradually opened for the reception of new and higher forms of religious truth. Against Superstition logic and speculation alone could effect but little, but when, later on, the day of scientific discovery arrived, then was the knell of Priestcraft tolled, and the days of Superstition numbered. 'Tis true, both these evil influences still have a lingering existence among us but the work then begun has not flagged, nor will it; the issue of the contest is not uncertain, and a time will come when the Church of Priestcraft and man the priest, will be known no more. JAS. L. GOODING.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS).

§ 3.—THE MORNING OF LIFE AND ITS LESSONS

IN the year 527, B.C., the death of his mother for a time brought the public employment of Confucius to a close. It was customary in China for the officials to abandon their office in order to perform the rites of mourning, and the young philosopher was about the last of men to break through a custom of that character. He buried her with his father at Fang-shan, observing that 'we are bound to equal duty to both our parents, and that they who were united during life should not be separated in death.' Acting upon his own ideas of what is due in such cases, and desiring to impress his views upon his fellow-countrymen, he had her corpse removed to its last resting-place in a style of magnificence strangely at variance with the simple habits of his life; but there was an aim in this beyond that of exhibiting his filial piety. It was part of his doctrine, taught even thus early in his career, that the dead should be disposed of in a more becoming manner than then was the rule. Persons went out and dug a hole in some piece of waste ground, into which the dead body was placed, without ceremony or public manifestation of sorrow. He contended that it was degrading to man, the lord of the earth, when the breath had departed from his frame, to treat it like the carcass of a brute; and that the common practice was repugnant to that mutual regard and affection which mankind ought to cherish towards one another. This, however, was not the limit of his teaching, for he added that by repeating at stated times acts of homage and respect to our ancestors, either at the spot where their remains were deposited, or before some representation of them in private

dwelling, a remembrance of the immediate authors of our being would be kept alive in our minds, as well as the glow of filial piety and affection; whilst the same practice, continued by our descendants, perpetuated as it were our own existence. This was the first great reform in the manners of his countrymen that he succeeded in effecting. It was the revival of an old custom, so modified and extended as to suit the condition of the age; but, unhappily, it bore within itself the seeds of evil. Had all men equalled this Reformer in virtue and thought, then no evil could have accrued from the practice; but being what they were, the system has degenerated into a worship of ancestors alike absurd and immoral.*

But although Confucius attended to the funeral obsequies in such a manner as to make them serviceable as teaching, we shall err greatly if the natural inference that he did not deeply feel the loss of his mother be allowed to remain upon our minds. He had arrived at that age when in Europe it is generally believed filial piety has settled down into a sort of calm friendship, and when the exhibition of deep grief for the loss of parents is viewed as a mark of weakness. And it is true that, considering the claims of a rising family, in connection with the plain way in which Nature teaches that all must die, there is no small measure of truth in what the Stoics teach—that such grief should be avoided. Yet, why waste breath, when it is so powerless to change the course of action, and so impotent to control the feelings? Besides, is it not good to have our share of sorrow? The baptism of grief is the renewal of life unto all who have any depth and nobleness of nature. Men do not comprehend the conditions, the inherent difficulties, and, above all, the real sanctity of life, until they have been plunged somewhat deeply into the sea of sorrow. As for the sage of China, no more fortunate accident could have overtaken him at the age of twenty-three. He had already seen enough of public life and its leaders, to be able in his study to comprehend the true springs of their action; he was standing in the position of one who had the prospect of rapidly becoming the Chief Minister of State, when all his powers would have been exhausted in public life, and the world would have been left the poorer of the Confucian philosophy.

Three years were allotted, according to the custom, to mourning, and during that period Confucius applied himself to the study of the ancient literature of his country, which seems even then to have been very extensive. It was rich in history, poetry, and philosophy, for, although disfigured by superstitious ideas, and unequal in breadth to the compositions of modern Europe, it was quite as rich in thought and earnestness. To the study of the ancients the philosopher added practice of the ceremonies, the use of arms, of diving, the study of arithmetic, writing, and music, to the latter of which he was especially attached. Thus the three years passed away without heaviness, each day leaving some new truth upon his mind. But when they had expired he was unwilling to resume his official duties. He had commenced as a man who knew everything, and had now arrived at the conclusion that, comparatively speaking, he knew nothing. Instead of resuming office, he resolved to devote himself still more earnestly to the pursuit of wisdom, and then it was that his fame, as one of the wisest, began to be spread abroad. Visitors came from various parts to obtain answers to their questions; some went away very much disappointed, while others remained to study as his disciples, and from this period he always had a body of attached followers.

Among those who sent to inquire his opinion upon various subjects

* "Asiatic Journal," vol. 41, p. 19.

was the king of Yu, who desired to be informed "what course of conduct he should pursue in order to govern wisely." Confucius informed the messenger that being wholly unacquainted with both the king and the people he could not give him the detailed answer that was desirable. "But," added he "if he desire to learn from me what the ancient sovereigns would have done in any specific emergency, I shall be glad to furnish the information, for, in that case, I shall speak of facts." It is reported that this reply led the monarch to invite the philosopher to visit Yu, where he earnestly applied himself to the reform of laws and manners, and introduced various ceremonies, such as were practised in Loo.

The king desired to retain Confucius in his service, but he had resolved to see a little more of the world. At his departure he said to his royal patron, "I cannot leave you without impressing upon you an ancient sentiment. *A sovereign who meditates changes and improvements in his state, should not begin them till he has acquired all the information on the subject he can gain from the practice of his neighbours.*"* To this he added that the sentiment had convinced him of a fact to which hitherto he had not paid sufficient attention—that a man must travel to learn. This was now his plan—he would visit the various petty states, into which, practically, China was at that time divided. There was verbal unity, but actual division. The emperor had authority over all the states; but he had no means of enforcing it. The land was broken up into petty kingdoms, and the monarchs were only formally submissive to the central power. Into these kingdoms, in order to study their course of life, the philosopher resolved to make his way, and to carry out his resolve was not difficult, for his fame was rapidly spreading through them all.

It appears, however, that at this period of his life he only visited the kingdoms of Wei, Tsae, and Kin, before settling down for the first time as a teacher. In the last he perfected himself in music under a professor of 'great reputation,' and in the first he was near losing his life in one of their miserable wars. Escaping from the difficulties he returned to his native kingdom, where he promptly refused to accept office, saying, "I devote myself to mankind in the aggregate; I dedicate my hours to the acquisition of knowledge, that I may be useful to them. I am but in my thirtieth year, a time of life when the mind is in all its vigour, and the body in its full strength." It was at this period that he first converted his residence into a sort of school for adults, to which 'all who lived virtuous lives' had free access. The rich and poor were equally welcome; they conversed about the various branches of knowledge and science, and the philosopher was ever ready to impart the information he had collected. This, however, was but the early seed of his plan, for the school lasted only one year, when he again went forth to observe and learn.

It is quite evident that he was too deeply dissatisfied with his small share of knowledge to continue the task of a teacher; and daily he had grown stronger in the conviction that it is only through an enlarged observation of the world that a man can qualify himself for furnishing practical instruction. The mere closet philosopher weaves beautiful but unpractical theories. He sees the course men should pursue, but not how they are to be induced to pursue it. He wastes his life, without preserving the lives of others. Confucius had absorbed into himself all that Chinese history and philosophy could give, but he knew that he could not use it wisely until, through an enlarged practical acquaintance with mankind, he had obtained the key to its written verities.

* "Asiatic Jour.," New Series, vol. 1, p. 20.

That key he obtained during the travels he now paid to the various courts. The King of Tse invited him to his Court; he accepted the invitation, and, dismissing the bulk of his followers, retained only thirteen disciples. By their aid he tried to introduce reforms in the state, but after twelve months' labour he abandoned the effort in despair—the people could not comprehend either his method or his aims.

About this time the emperor died, and the young monarch sent an invitation to the Sage, "Come, and see, and reform." He went, but failed to effect any great good. A Minister of State, a man who knew everything, and who was strong in his office, inquired of him, "And pray what is your doctrine? How am I to begin to acquire wisdom?" adding, "Pray tell me something which may be easily acquired, and as easily practised." A real statesman that; and doubtless a sneer played over his face while condescending to acknowledge that anything remained to be learnt by so great a man. The following answer of the philosopher is exceedingly simple, but full of meaning: "With reference to your high position, I advise you to bear this maxim in mind, that *steel, be it ever so hard, is liable to be broken*; that which appears to be the most firm, may often be most easily destroyed." A great lesson lies in that answer, although compressed into so small a compass. By forgetting it, the proudest monarchs have been humbled, and the greatest empires cast into irretrievable ruin.

He remained for some months at the Imperial Court, studying living men, alternately with old records; but when he contemplated the vices of the powerful, and the authority of the ignorant, a feeling of sorrow took possession of his heart, which caused him to return again to Tse, where, however, as yet, no fruit appeared as the result of the years of labour he had devoted to it. Shortly afterwards he returned home to Loo, where he abode through the following ten years, writing, teaching, and taking part in the administration. To the lessons he taught we shall devote our next paper. This we conclude with the incident connected with his resumption of office in a comparatively low station. The Ministers were alarmed on hearing of his return, fearing that he might influence the king to effect reforms which would be injurious to their interests. Hoping to disgust the philosopher, they persuaded the king to nominate him to a petty office in expectancy—an office that would keep him from the Court. His followers were offended, but Confucius accepted it, urging that were he to refuse, it would be supposed that he was proud; and he asked, "What good effect would my instructions have if it were supposed that I am actuated by such a passion?" Three years after, and when a new king had ascended the throne, a king who was governed by a base and selfish minister, who had driven all good men from the Court, Confucius threw up his office, and his disciples thought him inconsistent, but he defended himself thus: "When I was offered an inferior post, I was bound, for the sake of example, not to refuse it. They who offered it, moreover, were the legitimate representatives of the Sovereign, and it is the duty of a subject to serve his king in whatever post he is chosen to fill, provided he be not required to do what is manifestly wrong. The case is now changed. They who administer the Sovereign's power, and dispense dignities and offices, are odious usurpers, and to exercise any functions under them is, in some measure, to sanction their usurpation. Thus, for the sake of example, as well as out of a regard to duty, I am bound to reject with disdain what I once accepted with gratitude."

P. W. P.

THE CHRISTIAN SYSTEM OF TAKING OATHS.

CONSIDERABLE differences of opinion have prevailed amongst moral and political philosophers respecting the value and justifiability of oaths; but if the disputants profess to hold themselves bound by the teaching of Jesus, as is commonly the case, there is no room for questioning that, in obedience to his commands, they must not venture upon taking an oath, either in their private conversation or in the performance of citizen duties. He said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. But I say unto you, Swear not at all, neither by heaven for it is God's throne; nor by the earth for it is His footstool; neither by Jerusalem for it is the city of the Great King; neither shalt thou swear by thine head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communications be yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."* There are men who do not understand this language to mean that the system of oath-taking was to be abandoned; but who maintain that instead of repudiating the practice it distinctly approves it, and who hold that 'none save those who are corrupt at heart can distort the words of our Lord into an approval of refusing to attest our statements by an oath.'

Paley argues that, "as to the seeming universality of the prohibition 'swear not at all,' the emphatic clause 'not at all' is to be read in connexion with what follows, i.e. neither by 'the heaven' nor by 'the earth,' nor by 'Jerusalem,' nor by 'thy head;,' not at all, does not mean upon no occasion, but by none of these forms."† Surely if Jesus had meant only to forbid four modes of taking an oath, he selected that form of language which was the least fitted for his purpose. The 'not at all' must be wholly omitted as destroying that sense, and the form of testimony which follows is equally valueless. Had he said, 'Thou shalt not swear by heaven, by earth, by Jerusalem, or by thine head,' then it would have been less unreasonable to suppose he intended to draw the line at that point; but speaking as he spake no such conclusion can be justified. It seems, however, that this evasion has approved itself to the orthodox mind, for its use has become quite common.

By another section of divines, it has been contended that Jesus did not intend to repudiate the use of oaths for judicial purposes, but only in relation to what is called profane swearing. Pitman says, "As our Saviour in the preceding prohibition alludes to the oaths used in common conversation, he has not banished them from courts of judicature."‡ Here the point at issue is very coolly assumed, and then treated as an undoubted fact. Jeremy Taylor pursues the same course, arguing that Jesus did not aim at abolishing the use of oaths when deposing in judgment, but only oaths promissory, or vows; adding, "that all promises with oaths are forbidden to Christians, unless they be made to God, or God's vicegerent in a matter not trifling."§ His argument is so conducted, that, although at the opening he fully recognises that "Christ forbade all swearing," before he arrives at its close, he succeeds in introducing so many modifications that there are no barriers against swearing left standing. He admits that 'oaths promissory' are forbidden, yet urges that 'princes and such as have power of decreeing the injunction of promissory oaths be very curious and reserved, not lightly enjoining such

* Matthew v. 33-37.

† Practical Commentary, &c., p. 66.

+ Moral Philosophy Chap. xvi. § iii. 2.

§ Life of Christ, Part ii. sec. xii. §§ 18-22

'premises, neither in respect of the matter trivial, nor yet frequently, nor without great reason enforcing.*' Put into plain language, this is only saying 'Christ forbade the use of promissory oaths, and therefore princes must not make it their too common practice to insist upon their use.' So that, according to this, the will of princes is of superior authority to the direct commands of Jesus. Jeremy Taylor had made up his mind that oaths must be administered; that, especially in the revolutionary age in which he lived, they could not be avoided; and then he felt it to be necessary to strain the words of the Great Teacher into conformity with the popular usages. If no such custom had prevailed, and it had been proposed to introduce it, no man would have more eloquently argued against it, urging from the text that to swear for any purpose would be to violate the law given by Jesus.

The plain fact of the matter may be thus simply stated. The usages of society have, in opposition to the injunction of Jesus, maintained the system of swearing; while professed believers desire to force a seeming harmony between the prohibition and the continuance of the custom. They are not really careful to observe the commands of their Master; but only to have it believed that they are so. As formal Christians they think much of the name, but little of real obedience. They pursue such courses as are most convenient for them, and then measure and fix the meaning of his words by that convenience. They do not go to his teaching to search out the rule of duty; but endeavour to discover how his sayings may be strained into conformity with their practices. Hence it comes that when in plain language he condemns any practice which is popular, and supported by law, they hesitate not to set forth that his words are not to be understood in their obvious meanings, but only in a non-natural sense. When he says, 'Thou shalt do no murder,' they recognise that his meaning is precisely that which lies upon the surface of the words, but when he says 'Swear not at all,' then, because they wish to preserve the oath-taking custom, they resort to all kinds of arguments to show that he meant to enjoin men to swear in the absolute sense, whenever called upon officially to do so;—the negative in all its forms is carefully excised, and the non-natural is made to triumph. They are not brave enough honestly to say that, finding it convenient to continue the system of swearing, they oppose the teaching of Jesus; they are not candid enough to do justice to his aims and motives, and simplicity of speech; but to shield their own perversity and cowardice, they proceed, practically, and in the most scandalous manner, to represent him as the greatest Jesuit that ever existed—that is, they make him out to have used language with double meanings, language that could only have deceived all who heard him speak, and thus while professing to honour his name, they offer the greatest insult to his memory. To illustrate this I shall subjoin a few out of hundreds of examples, in which men have distorted his words, so as to force them to bear these foreign meanings.

Some of the German critics have made the discovery that 'Jesus did not intend his words to be used as of things and men as they then existed.' They argue that Christians were not to make oath one to another, but only to the world. 'Within the spiritual kingdom there were to be no oaths,' yet in all external action the righteous are to use them until the world becomes spiritual. As a rule they are not to swear in common conversation. "But when adequate reason for an oath occurs, it is not only *permitted* but even *commanded*, as a service to God and to our neighbour, to corroborate our

* Life of Christ, Part II. sec. xli, § 22.

"plain words by such confirmation as may maintain the truth, and advance the cause of charity."* Stier enters into a lengthened argument, to show that Jesus meant all that, but the judicious reader is not long in perceiving that the author carried his conclusion with him, and did not reach it through the force of his argument.

It is needless to travel any farther upon this path, for it will yield nothing satisfactory. The only result to be arrived at by a painfully minute comparison of the explanations, is that all the writers were juggling with words whose plain meaning cannot be misunderstood. A body of thieves could juggle just as well with the words 'thou shalt not steal.' They could most learnedly prove them to mean only that 'men should not do so in daily life,' and that the prohibition does not apply to the hungry man or the English soldier who has found his way into a Chinese residence, or, in fact, to a thousand other conditions easily to be conceived. There is no better reason for limiting the one than the other, for in each case the original language conveys a direct repudiation of the practice it names.

In justice however to those who have not consented to play fast and loose with the obvious meaning of words, it should be mentioned that thousands have withstood every temptation, and have borne the severest punishments rather than take an oath. Many of the early Fathers would not swear, though commanded by the civil officers, and threatened with death for their refusal, and St. Basil dealt severely with his Christian brethren who weakly submitted.† At great cost, and enduring many sufferings, members of the Society of Friends have consistently refused to violate this injunction of Jesus, and their learned writers have left Christian men without any excuse in misunderstanding its meaning. Penn applied his vigorous mind to it, and succeeded in presenting the whole argument in a concise form.‡ Barclay completely exhausted it, and has shewn not only that the words of Jesus cannot be properly understood in any other sense than as prohibiting the use of oaths in every form, and under all circumstances; but, also, that the New Testament writers in other words repeat his teaching.§ He does not however notice the all-important proof found in the fact that Jesus belonged to the Essenes, and that they would not take an oath. It is perfectly true that in many particulars he had gone beyond the limits of their teaching, and had risen to the perception of truths which lay beyond their ken; but there were others in which he still held himself to be a member of their body. One of the latter lay in this, that they would not consent to take an oath because of believing it to be essentially sinful. Josephus says of them, "Their word "on every occasion is as firm as an oath; they avoid the administration of oaths "as believing the custom of swearing to be worse than perjury."|| This was what Jesus believed, and therein lies the meaning of his words, "But let your "communications be yea, yea, nay, nay, for whatsoever is more than this "cometh of evil." The great majority of men failed to perceive any evil in an oath—could not understand that a solemn swearing to the truth of a statement would produce evil; the Essenes had, in common with Solon and other great lawgivers, arrived at another conclusion, which Jesus shared; unhappily none of the men wrote down their reasons. They denounced the practice as productive of evil, but have left us to imagine their motives, or to find in our own experience sufficient reason for repudiating the practice.

P. W. P.

* "Words of the Lord Jesus," vol. I. p. 187. † Serm. xiii. *De patient.* ‡ Works, vol. II. p. 363.
 § "Apology," Prop. xv. §§ x-xii., Eighth Ed., pp. 542-566. || De Bell. Jud. ii. § 6.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE PSALMS 'OF DAVID.'

(Continued from p. 32.)

THIS is rather long for quotation, but is worth reading many times, for what can answer the common religious theories better than such a poem? There it is as in thought it grew up in the human heart, and gradually got itself shaped into poetic form, precisely the same as any other of the numerous poems antiquity has bequeathed us. It is, however, a question if the man who wrote it, wrote out of the fulness of his heart, in the same manner as a Burns or a Cowper have written; the only thing certain is, that all the inspiration he had was of the same nature as theirs. There is an undertone of deep religious feeling expressed in the poem, but, I confess, without any corresponding proof of heart-felt earnestness. When a young man reads the Hebrew Melodies of Lord Byron, he feels very much astonished at what he has heard about the scepticism and immoralities of their author, and inquires if the whole story be not a vile fabrication. Time, however, reveals to his mind that there is no necessary connection between the highest active morality and poetic excellence, and upon this well-known fact we proceed when we judge David as a man, apart from David as a poet. Still, however, it is not to be disguised that many excellent critics have denied that he wrote any of the Psalms, and it is only upon conjecture we assign this or any other to his pen.

In this collection there are many private pieces—what we should now call fragmentary passages—fugitive pieces written for the relief of a troubled heart. It not unfrequently happens to those who habitually use the pen that hours come when sorrow is throned in the heart, and, although endeavouring their best, they cannot rouse themselves out of the miry slough of despondency into which they have sunk. Adequate reasons for this—physical and mental—can sometimes be assigned, but more frequently there are none to be discovered. They have sunk into a gloominess of spirit, and cannot for a time be roused into activity. Then it is that, travelling through their past, and surveying the weaknesses of which they have been guilty, they unduly magnify and misreport them. The cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, is so distended and coloured by over-heated fancy, by a misled imagination, that it shuts out all light and gladness, and leaves them immersed only the more deeply in a sense of sin and shame, wholly disproportioned to the offence and its causes. Poor Cowper was frequently the victim—for years the victim, of this mental malady, and, in his case, it was without cause. Many have cited his case as furnishing a terrible proof of the evil consequences of thoroughly believing in the Christian religion, forgetting that men of all creeds have suffered the same. There are hymns in the Rig Veda, in which, with all the passion and broken-heartedness of the Psalm-writer, the subject is dwelt upon, and judging from various Greek and other fragments which have reached us, especially in the Anthology, I should be more inclined to view it as physico-mental, that as essentially associated with any religious theory. The celebrated melancholy poem of Cowper is but the reproduction in English of various passages from the Psalms:—

"Hatred and vengeance—my eternal portion,
Scarce can endure delay of execution—
Wait with impatient readiness to sieze my
Soul in a moment.

Damned below Judas, more abhorred than he was,
Who for a few pence sold his Holy Master!
Twice betrayed, Jesus me, the last delinquent,
Deems the profaneest.

Man disavows and Deity disowns me,
 Hell might afford my miseries a shelter;
 Therefore Hell keeps her ever hungry mouths all
 Bolted against me.

Hard lot, encompassed with a thousand dangers;
 Weary, faint, trembling with a thousand terrors,
 I'm called in anguish to receive a sentence
 Worse than Abiram's.

Him the vindictive rod of angry Justice
 Sent quick and howling to the centre headlong,
 I, fed with judgment, in a fleshy tomb am
 Buried above ground.

The author of the eighty-eighth Psalm was in no better frame of mind. He was not acquainted with the system of theology—the Calvinism, embodied in Cowper's poems, but his heart was quite as completely overwhelmed by sadness. His "soul was full of trouble," he "was counted with them who go down to the "pit," and all his friends had turned their backs upon him. The world had for him neither joy, nor the hope of joy; and he who wrote the seventeenth was in no better condition. As we read such compositions, we cannot avoid feeling how absurd it is for men to declare that God inspired the authors. Would He inspire men to write that which is untrue? He had not cast the writers off for ever; He had not forsaken them, any more than He had forsaken others, and hence, if it be said that He instructed them, that He inspired them, then it must be acknowledged that, under His guidance they wrote that which is untrue. I repudiate the entire theory as unworthy of credit. The fact is that the authors wrote the thoughts of their own minds—diseased thoughts too—precisely the same as Cowper did. We have quite as much reason to believe he was heaven-directed as that they were. But probably, with a little reflection, the majority of men will reach the conclusion that Heaven would hardly trouble itself to inspire men, so that they may write out morbid pictures of life which, besides that they do themselves no good, are particularly likely to inflict injury upon their innocent readers.

It is quite natural to find in this collection a number of national songs. Every nation must sing its own heroes, and, in some kind of song, write out its great successes, else all the valour is lost, and experience is not accumulated in any practical shape. The song of the former victory inspires the young soldier, who is now entering upon his first field of fight, and he dares, and conquers, as a consequence of the inspiration thus received, far more than he could otherwise have fronted. But the peculiarities of nations, their religious theories, will naturally get themselves written out in these songs, and as the spirit of the nation is, so will be the writing. In England we write 'of Nelson and the North,' but the Hebrews would have written 'Of God and the North,' for God is the great Hero in all their battle songs, and He it is who delivered them from danger. Read it in the hundred and twenty-ninth:—

"Often have they oppressed me from my youth,
 (May Israel now say)
 Often have they oppressed me from my youth,
 Yet have they not prevailed against me;
 The plowers plowed upon my back,
 They made their furrows long;
 The Righteous God hath cut the cords of the wicked,
 The foes of Zion shall return confounded,
 As grass upon the housetops must they be,
 That before it is ripened withereth away,
 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand,
 Nor the binder of sheaves his arm,
 Where none that pass by say,

'The blessing of God be upon you,
'We bless you in the name of Jehovah.'"

There is a fine passage in the hundred and twenty-sixth, in which God is again the Doer:—

"When God turned back the captives of Zion,
We were like them that dream;
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
Our tongues with songs of joy.
Then said they among the nations,
The Lord hath done great things for them,
The Lord hath done great things for us,
Whereof we are glad."

God has done all, and hence is entreated to turn again the captivity of Zion, so that their mourning may be changed into joy. The hundred and twenty-fourth Psalm is commonly spoken of as one of the best specimens of the national song:—

"Had not Jehovah been with us,
Now may Israel say,
Had not Jehovah been with us,
When men rose up against us,
Then had they swallowed us up,
In their fierce wrath against us,
Then had the waters overwhelmed us,
The waves had gone over our souls.
Blessed be God who gave us not
To become a prey unto their teeth.
We have escaped as a bird from the fowler's snare,
The net is broken and we have escaped;
Our help is with God who made heaven and earth."

This is one of the 'Songs of Degrees,' and was probably composed in the time of Hezekiah; some believe it to be by Isaiah, but this is merely a conjecture, probable, but having no direct evidence in its favour.

There is a set of poems in this collection, about which there has been a great deal of discussion, without, however, determining the point in dispute. The set is called "Songs of Degrees," or "Odes of the Ascensions," but the exact meaning of the name cannot be fixed. The series comprises from the one hundred and twentieth to the one hundred and thirty-fourth, inclusive. The theory about them is, that they were sung by the people when they came up to Jerusalem to worship, or when they returned from their captivity in Babylon. In the former case, they may have been written as early as the age of Solomon, in the latter, not till after the times of Jeremiah. It is argued by many that they were "Pilgrim Songs," which the Hebrews chaunted on the road when they went up to the annual feasts; but if that were true, it must be recognised as very curious that no notice to that effect has been preserved by their historians. Although remiss in the early part of their existence as a nation, they were not so after the captivity, and consequently the chances are that some notice of such a custom would have been preserved. Another theory is that they were sung by them when ascending the steps of the temple, one Psalm on each step; but of this, also, there is no distinct evidence. In fact, we have no reason to believe any other than that they were sung by the Levites and the congregation, the same as the others, and although it is probable that they were used only at particular times, we are not in a position to say what times they were. The theory of Gesenius, however, is worthy of notice. He argues that their title indicates the gradually progressive rhythm of thought peculiar to these Psalms, a phrase or clause of one sentence being repeated in the next, with an addition, forming a kind of *climax* or *progression*, both in the ideas and terms. For example:—

I lift up mine eyes to the hills
From whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from Jehovah
The Creator of heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved;
Thy *Keeper* slumbers not.

Behold! he neither *slumbers* nor sleeps,
The Keeper of Israel.

Jehovah is thy *Keeper*;
Jehovah thy *light* is on thy right hand.

The sun shall not *light* thee by day
Nor the moon by night.

Jehovah keeps thee from ill,
Keeps thy soul.

Jehovah keeps thine outgoing and incoming
From henceforth even for ever.

This, however, is not peculiar to these poems, for it is found in others, and, moreover, the system does not run through the series of fifteen, so that the theory fails.

There is one of the series, the one hundred and thirty-third, which is worthy of quotation:—

“How blest the sight, the joy how sweet,
When brothers join’d with brothers meet
In bands of mutual love!
Less sweet the liquid fragrance, shed
On Aaron’s consecrated head,
Ran trickling from above;
And reach’d his beard, and reach’d his vest:
Less sweet the dew on Hermon’s breast
Or Zion’s hill descend:
That hill has God with blessings crown’d,
There promis’d grace that knows no bound,
And life that knows no end.”

Here I am led by the connection to advert to the curious fact, that the majority of these Psalms were chaunted in a peculiar manner by the Priests, Levites, and people. Bishop Horsley says that “the far greater part of the Psalms are “a sort of dramatic ode, consisting of dialogues between persons sustaining different characters.”* Thus, they are to be classed with the sacred hymns chaunted by the Greeks, of which so many fragments are preserved in the Anthology. There are abundant reasons for believing this representation to be correct. They were sung alternately by opposite choirs, and the one choir usually performed the hymn itself, while the other sung a particular distich, which was interposed at stated intervals, of the nature of the proasm or epode of the Greeks. In this manner the Israelites chaunted the ode at the Red Sea, for “Miriam the prophetess took a “timbrel in her hand, and the women followed her with timbrels, and with dances; “and Miriam answered them:” that is, she and the women sung the responses. Sometimes the musical performance was differently conducted, one choir singing a single verse to the other, while the other constantly added a verse corresponding in a measure to the former: Ezra informs us, for instance, that the following distich—

“Sing praises to Jehovah, for He is good,
Because His mercy endureth for ever—”

was sung by the Priests and Levites, in alternate choirs, at the command of David. In that Psalm † the latter verse, sung by the latter choir, forms a perpetual epode. Of the same nature is the song of the women concerning Saul and David;‡ for “the women who played answered one another.”

(To be continued.)

* “Theological Works,” Vol. IV.

† Psalm cxxxvi.

‡ 1 Sam. xviii. 7.

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THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE modern reader of the Gospels is naturally anxious to discover when and by whom their authority and authenticity was determined. He hears of the fact that about the close of the second century, various 'Gospels' were known, and highly esteemed, which are no longer accepted by the Churches; he finds that these rejected works were quoted in common with those received by the men who are still praised alike by Catholic and Protestant believers; and, unable by himself to solve the problem of their authenticity, he eagerly inquires when, upon what principles, and by whom, the line was drawn, by reason of which some books were declared to be genuine works of inspiration while others, of equal antiquity, were repudiated as spurious. To this important question there is no certain answer; there is only an uncertain sound. The Church does not know when the Scripture Canon was determined any more than it knows who wrote the books, and, in fact, there is no reason for believing any corporate body of men ever met to discuss and settle that great question. The fact of our having the books must be attributed for the most part to accidental causes; and that some are called canonical, while others are rejected, must be accounted for in like manner. It was external accident rather than design on the part of the Church, or their own historical value, that fixed their position.

The too popular theory is that a Council was held at Nice or at Laodiceæ, at which the whole matter was finally settled. This, however, is a mere matter of vague tradition, and the forms in which the story has reached us are so contradictory that no scholarly writers of modern times feel at liberty to assert its truth. Were this done, they would feel somewhat embarrassed by the vulgar story which accompanies it. According to that, when the wise men had assembled to solve the great problem, they put all the books under a table, and fell to prayer, earnestly soliciting God to cause the divinely-inspired works to come out from the others. Their prayer was answered; for, says this absurd tradition, 'all the inspired books came marvellously up to the top of the table.' But this being rejected, as it must be by every candid mind, we are utterly at a loss to discover both when the Canon was settled, and how the Church arrived at the knowledge that the books now received were written by inspiration.

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Various writers have suggested the probable tests to which each book was subjected. The late Bishop of Norwich, Dr. Hinds, set them out with great minuteness, as well as with an evident knowledge of what constitutes evidence. According to his method the first step would be to discover, 'either by tradition, the characters of the MSS., or by any combination of external and internal evidence,' if a certain book ascribed to Paul or Luke were really composed by him. But the inquiry would not rest there, for, having determined the authorship, 'it would be requisite further to know the author was inspired to 'write it,' and to that end another examination would be necessary. He suggests other natural questions 'which would be asked and answered,' and then suggests that the inquiry would end 'with an examination into the 'purity of the text,' so as to discover and eject interpolations. All this is very orderly, and nothing could be more satisfactory than such an examination, if conducted by competent persons; but the all-important question is, Was any such inquiry instituted? and if so, when? where? and by whom? He does not furnish the slightest evidence, but rests content with saying, "It does not enter into my plan to investigate the *proofs* made use of in the first settlement of the Canon; that this kind of evidence must have been one of the chief by which the judgment of the Church was determined may be naturally concluded, both from the nature of the subject and from the notices which are left us of such proofs being resorted to by Eusebius and others."*

It is sincerely to be regretted that a Christian Bishop should condescend to employ the vulgar arts of sophistry when dealing with such subjects. He must have known that to suggest a falsehood is much the same as to assert one, and he knew that there is not a scintilla of evidence to justify the conclusion that any such critical inquiry was ever entered upon, at any period, during the early Christian ages. And so far is Eusebius from justifying the remark made about his 'mode of inquiry,' that he never pretends to having a critical knowledge, but is content to ascribe what he knows to the traditions he has heard and to his casual inquiries.

It is quite evident that none of the Fathers of the first four centuries were aware of any such examination having taken place. They invariably write as men who thought little of the external evidence, but much of what was felt within. Augustin says:—"In receiving Canonical Scriptures, let him who desires carefully to study them follow the judgment of the *greater number of Catholic congregations*, among which they certainly ought to be reckoned which are Apostolic Sees, having had letters sent them by the Apostles. He will wisely prefer those received by all Catholic congregations to those which some congregations do not receive. He will prefer those which are received by many and eminent Churches, above others which are received by few Churches and of less authority. But if he should find some received by the greatest number of Churches, others by the more eminent, which however will scarcely happen, I think such Scriptures ought to be held by him to be of equal authority."† Had Augustin been acquainted with any critically-established Canon, he would not have spoken thus. The entire passage proves that, so far as he knew, there was no external authoritative standard to which an inquirer could be directed.

There had not risen a body of men who were capable of discussing the subject in the manner indicated by Dr. Hinds. The teachers were doctrinal men, and too fond of speculating about what they could not understand to

* History of Christian Church, vol. i. pp. 227-8. † Lardner's Credibility, vol. iv. p. 492.

condescend to discuss such common matters as the historical credibility of books. They were all inspired, why then discuss about Matthew's inspiration? Such was the rage for doctrinal disputes in the fourth century that they found their way into all the shops and markets. Neander calls attention to the words of Gregory of Nyssa, who says:—"Every nook and corner of the city is filled with men who debate incomprehensible questions; the streets, the markets, the people who sell old clothes, those who sit at the tables of the money-changers, or those who deal in provision; ask a man how many oboli an article costs, and he gives you a specimen of dog-matising on generated and ungenerated being. Inquire the price of bread, you are answered that 'the Father is greater than the Son, and the Son 'subordinate to the Father.' Ask if the bath is ready, and you are answered, 'The Son of God was created from nothing.'"

If the people were in such a rage for doctrines, we may rest assured they were little qualified to discuss the question of the Canon, and their bishops were no better, for they fought rather than debated, and depended for success more upon their muscular, than their critical or oratorical power. Gregory of Nazianzus evidently looked with horror to an assembly of bishops, although he was of their number, for he says:—"I dread every assembly of bishops; for I have never yet seen a good end of any one—never been at a synod which did more for the suppression than it did for the increase of evils, for an indescribable thirst for contention, and for rule prevails in them, and a man will be far more likely to draw upon himself the reproach of wishing to set himself up as the judge of other men's wickedness than he will be to succeed in any attempts to remove it."† Whether, if such men had decided upon what should be the 'Canon of Scripture,' any weight would attach to their decision, hardly needs to be debated. It is enough to know that they were incompetent, and that the Church did not attempt in any formal manner to settle it. As time passed on, and guided by their doctrinal tendencies, certain books were set up as constituting the New Testament Scriptures, but not without admitting that they rested upon the Church approval. It was not pretended that their literary history was irreproachable, and it remained for Protestantism to discover what should, and what should not be in the Canon.

The reason why some books were received and others were rejected were doctrinal. There was no questions asked about who wrote them; but only this, What do they teach? The Christian Fathers, who are now lauded to the skies for distinguishing so cleverly between the sound and the spurious books, were powerful advocates of the Apocryphal Hebrew books, all of which were read in the Churches. They would have been a thousand times more astonished at hearing a man deny the Evangelists, than to hear Esdras or the Wisdom of Solomon repudiated. They quoted those now denounced books, and did not quote the Gospels; they read regularly to the people sundry passages from the former, but not from the latter. They knew more of the evangelical history than the moderns do, and hence thought less of it. Tertullian stood up manfully to defend 'The Book of Enoch,' but had he been called upon to do the like office for the Gospel of Luke or Mark, it is doubtful if he would have complied. It is distance that lends enchantment, and time that pours the oil of conservatism upon the fading parchments.

P. W. P.

* *Oratio de Deitate Filii et Spiritus Sancti*, T. iii. fo. 466.
† Neander. *Church History*, vol. iii. p. 249.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—IV.

BERENGER.

ONE of the immediate results of the work of the itinerant teachers, mentioned in our article of last week, was the establishment of schools in many parts of Europe. In the year 1060, we find such a school established in Tours by one Berenger. A layman, teaching secular learning, is a sign of a new era, if not arrived, at least giving promise of its arrival. The man, like his work, was in advance of his age. The priests at the Cathedral Church of Tours, more enlightened or more politic (we know not which) than the clergy generally were, offered Berenger the post of superintendent of the Cathedral school, and afterwards made him archdeacon of Angers. Berenger, however, was no common man; and although he accepted these offices, the course he had proposed to himself was not altered; he was by no means content to impart only the 'spiritual nourishment' usual in Cathedral schools, but added secular instruction, and that for all who chose to come. "The benevolent zeal" (such is the testimony of Neander) "which he manifested in sustaining and encouraging the efforts of all who sought after knowledge gained him scholars and friends throughout all France. It was objected, however, to him and his school, that he was constantly deviating from the beaten track, that he was for striking out his own path, in matters both of secular and ecclesiastical science."* Yes! here was a man who dared to think for himself in an age of implicit belief in authority. He actually had the audacity to attempt to alter things as they were—sought to make improvements in grammar, and to introduce a new pronunciation of Latin. Small things these to us, but great things then, and indicative of bold and original thought and no small self-reliance.

To add to the grievous enormities of improving grammar, and civilising the pronunciation of Latin, this man had the temerity to criticise the immorality of the clergy, and to doubt the holiness of the monks. 'Purple and silk,' said he, 'are not the only things to be found in hell, the monk's cowl may also be seen there.' He had the unparalleled boldness to say of the Pope, that he was 'not even an upright man,' and to call the Roman Church 'a council of Satan—a seat of wickedness and vanity.' At this time, however, a moral reformer was tolerably safe, compared with one whose orthodoxy could be called in question. The immorality of Church Dignitaries had already become a mark for the shafts of more than one reformer in those times; for it was now that the great Hildebrand was beginning his work. Berenger seems to have taken wider views, although as yet, he had not touched matters connected with the faith, was probably a sound believer in all the articles taught by the Church. He longed for a reformation in the Church; so did Hildebrand—but the latter looked at the matter from a priestly point of view, while Berenger's desire arose from a purely religious feeling. "That time," he writes in one of his letters, "when religion flourished in the first bloom of her youth, was a time when men distinguished for science and dignity of life were made bishops, in conformity with the ecclesiastical laws, when that which constitutes the greatest, nay, the sole ornament of the Christian religion, Love, had not grown cold by the domination of wickedness; but when, rather, by the glowing fire of love all impurity of heart was consumed, all darkness of the understanding dispelled, by the purity of

* Church Hist. vi. p. 222.

"its light! But in the times in which God has made it our lot to live, we see the annihilation of all religion, we see the sun turned into darkness, the moon into blood. We see how all confess God with words, but deny Him by their works; how they say Lord! Lord! but do not the things He has commanded them."

A man looking with eyes thus open to the iniquity in the Church, and with self-reliance enough to strike out a path for himself, would be easily led to look from the practice of the teachers to the doctrines taught, and to question whether the Church might not have deviated from the truth in its teachings as well as in its practice. One who had dared so openly to denounce the moral delinquency in the Church must have thereby made many enemies who would be only too ready to take the first opportunity to catch him tripping. He might have lived openly in defiance of all moral law with impunity, as many others did (until Hildebrand's reforms compelled a change in this), but when he touched Church-doctrine, then he afforded his enemies the opportunity they had long sought. Had a man less just than Hildebrand been at the head of the Church in those days, we should have had to record a different fate for Berenger than that which befell him. This first revolt of human reason against mediæval superstition and Priestcraft arose in reference to the monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation, or, as Michelet (with sly satire we think) is pleased to term it, 'the marvellous poetry of a God inclosed in a loaf, spirit in matter, infinity in an atom.' Berenger, who, as we have seen, conceived of religion as love, and thought more of active virtue than dead forms, might very naturally hesitate to shut his eyes to the fact, that though the priest said, and the multitude believed, that the loaf was transformed into the body, and the wine into the blood of Christ, yet, that they were after all nothing but bread and wine. When he saw men willing to shut their eyes to the facts of sense, he might very reasonably doubt their capacity to appreciate moral perceptions. By opening their bodily eyes, he perhaps hoped to stimulate their moral sense; but this was striking at that superstition on which Church power was based; the Church, therefore, could not stand quietly by and see it done. Accordingly, when Berenger broached the doctrine, that the bread and wine of the Eucharist were merely symbols of the body and blood of Christ, the priesthood denounced him, and he was declared a heretic.

Though condemned and imprisoned, Berenger still maintained the truth of his doctrine, and offered to prove the same from the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers. A Council was held at Paris, at which he was adjudged to be worthy of death unless he recanted. It was immediately after this that Hildebrand came to France as Papal Legate; Berenger appealed to him. Hildebrand was not a man to succumb to the multitude, was wise enough, too, to see the impolicy of dividing the Church upon this point, and, moreover, desirous to increase the Papal authority; he accordingly declared the sentence of the Council inoperative until confirmed by the Pope. To Rome accordingly Berenger proceeded with Hildebrand. The fury of the Roman clergy led them to call for the death of the heretic, and, in the fear of this, he recanted; but when he returned to France, he repented of his cowardice, and again taught his doctrine. The influence of Hildebrand, however, prevented, for a time, any further molestation of him. But in an age when fraud and error are triumphant, the witnesses for the Truth must never hope for peace. Lanfranc (conspicuous in the history of the Norman Conquest as the adviser of William the Conqueror) sought to bring Berenger

into disrepute, by accusing him of perjury in forswearing his recantation. "It is true," said Berenger, in reply, "that human wickedness can by outward force extort from human weakness a different confession, but a change of conviction is what God's almighty agency alone can effect. Thou priest," he continues, "coldly passest by him whom robbers have left half dead; but God has already provided for me, so that I shall not be left alone." In conclusion, he implores the readers of his reply to award to him their compassion, for that by the fear of death, he had been led to abandon the defence of the Truth. "He went on with his work," says Neander, "disseminating his doctrine, not only by what he wrote, but also by means of his scholars, through France; and, as a teacher, he ever continued to exert a wide influence, both in France and in other countries."*

But Priestcraft was yet too powerful to be defied with impunity; and the heresy of Berenger was all the more hateful because it was based on common sense. A man who had the powerful argument of fact in his favour must be put down if possible at any cost. The outcry of the zealots against him became so great that Hildebrand was forced to summon him again to Rome. The bishops demanded that he should now not only be required to recant, but that he should undergo the fiery ordeal to prove his sincerity; probably they hoped by this means to kill him. Hildebrand, however (to his honour be it said), was no persecutor; he consented to require the recantation, but peremptorily refused the ordeal. Once again Berenger succumbed to his fears and recanted, but on his return to France again retracted his recantation. Hildebrand refused, however, to countenance any further interference with him; he knew the best way to propagate a heresy was to persecute it, and the course he took was the wisest, while there is no doubt it was also most in accordance with his own feelings. Indeed, some have supposed from the conduct pursued by Hildebrand in this matter, that he himself really held the views entertained by Berenger; but, from all we know of him, it is difficult to suppose that if so he would have concealed the fact. The truth is, Hildebrand's efforts were directed to a moral reform of the Church, and he wished not to complicate his position by entering into theological squabbles. Berenger died in France, at a very advanced age, in the year 1088. The latter years of his life were embittered by a feeling that in the recantation he had twice made, he had been a coward, and had perhaps damaged the truth he taught. We feel, in reading his writings on this matter, that if he sinned, he also paid the penalty.

Some have thought fit to condemn, in no very measured terms, the weakness of Berenger in retracting his opinions, and to sneer at his want of the martyr-spirit. Waddington is particularly unjust towards him, and declares that he went to Rome, on both occasions of his recanting, "calmly prepared to debase himself by an insincere and perjured humiliation."† Christian charity should not have penned those words without proof of the statement, especially with a knowledge of the remorse displayed by Berenger at the contemplation of his own weakness, which proves, at least, his sincere sorrow for what he did. All men have not the capacity—the moral or physical courage—to become martyrs; and in the presence of the recantations of that great "hero" of the Anglican Church, Cranmer, at least an English Churchman should have shown some lenity to Berenger. To us this man stands honourable—in spite of the want of moral courage (it might be only physical courage he wanted), which, in the presence of his assembled foes he showed—as being

* Church Hist. vi. p. 339.

† Hist. Church. Lib. Useful Knowl. p. 396.

the first to import reason into theology, the first Freethinker in those Ages of Darkness. That one man in an age of superstition and darkness like that should have dared to use his reason and appeal to it, is sufficient to entitle him to our esteem.

For the enunciation of the principle that Articles of Faith are criticisable by reason we owe Berenger thanks; and, before condemning him for not submitting to death, we should ever remember that he was not the only man in whom the spirit has been willing, but the flesh weak, and it must be placed to his account, that he energetically acknowledged his weakness, sorrowed over his fault, and did all in his power to repair it. And this, at least, he accomplished. Waddington (whose bias against him is evident) would have us believe that his influence died with him, and declares that his followers did not exist as a sect.* This, however, is not true, for we find amongst the heretics of Languedoc, 100 years after his time, the sect of the Berengarians. But his work produced other fruit; Roscelin followed him, and reduced the monstrous mystery of the Trinity to the rational conception of three Gods; and then came Abelard, with the grand principle which lies at the root of all progress, that wisdom comes of frequent and assiduous questioning. Here, then, deep down in the darkness and ignorance of that eleventh century, we meet with those seeds which through seven hundred years of future time have been fructifying and producing their results in the shape of new truths and fresh blessings for humanity.

JAS. L. GOODING.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS).

§ 4.—THE AUTHOR AND HIS WORKS.

WHEN, after the already recited visits to the neighbouring States, Confucius settled down again in his native State, he devoted himself to the reproduction of the Chinese classics in an improved form, with the addition of comments. His first task was with the book of ancient poetry, the *Shi-King*. In ancient days the officers of State were commissioned to bring with them, on their annual visit to the Imperial Court, the poetry which during the year had been composed in their provinces. It mattered not what the subject was—all had to be brought up, and the Emperor, sitting in state, determined what portions should be preserved, and those he approved were written into the great book of poems. This mode of collection enables us to account for the fact, that so many of the pieces are as dark enigmas, which need a volume in explanation. They were called into being through some local causes which are now unknown, and the natural consequence is that they are but imperfectly comprehended by the Chinese nation. It is reported that when Confucius took this book in hand it contained several thousand pieces, and he reduced the number to three hundred, arranged under three heads:—1. Those which relate to national manners; 2. Miscellaneous, comprising songs, satires, and elegies; 3. Hymns of praise, or religious pieces, to be sung in the ceremonies and during the great festivals.

It is probable that beside weeding out thousands, of whose teaching or structure the philosopher did not approve, he also improved those he pre-

* Hist. Church. Lib. Useful Knowl. p. 295, note.

served, but even with that revision they are not very chaste, or in any sense vigorous. The Chinese have no great poem, no *Iliad* or *Faery Queen*, but only these fugitive fragments, and consequently their poetic standard ranges rather low. Confucius, however, entertained quite a different opinion to that we have expressed. He viewed the odes as the ideals of perfection, and recommended their study as of the highest importance. In the *Lun-Yu* he is reported as saying, "Why, my sons, do you not study the book of Odes? "If we creep on the ground, if we lie useless and inglorious, those poems "will raise us to true glory: in them we see, as in a mirror, what may best "become us, and what will be unbecoming; by their influence we shall be "made social, affable, benevolent; for as music combines sounds in just "melody, so the ancient poetry tempers and composes our passions: the "Odes teach us our duty to our parents at home, and abroad to our prince: "they instruct us also delightfully in the various productions of Nature."*

Sir William Jones was of opinion that the majority of these odes are near 3,000 years old, and, as he observes, we must say 'much older if 'we give credit to the Chinese annals.' He gives one (a panegyric on Yu-kun, prince of Hu-hi, in the province of Honang, who died at the age of 100, in the year 736 B.C.), the author of which he supposes to have been contemporary with Hesiod and Homer. His chronology needs revision, but we allow it to pass, to come at once to the ode literally translated:—

"Behold yon reach of the River Ki
Its green reeds how luxuriant—how luxuriant!
Thus is our prince adorned with virtues;
As a carver, as a filer of ivory.
As a cutter, as a polisher of gems,
Oh, how elate, how sagacious!
Oh, how dauntless, how composed!
How worthy of fame, how worthy of reverence!
We have a prince adorned with virtues
Whom to the end of time we cannot forget."

It seems that other princes were not so good; for in the same book the following ode reveals another character:—

"See where yon crag's imperious height	So scowls the chief whose word is law,
The sunny highland crowns,	Regardless of our state;
And hideous as the brow of night	While millions gaze with painful awe,
Above the torrent frowns.	With fear allied to hate."

In order that our readers may not form too low an estimate of these poems, we add one more specimen from the collection furnished by Mr. Davis.†

"Now scarce is heard the zephyr's sigh
To breathe along the narrow vale;
Now sudden bursts the storm on high,
In mingled rush of rain and hail:
—While adverse fortune louring frown'd,
Than ours no tie could closer be;
But, lo! when ease and joy were found,
Spurn'd was I, ingrate—spurn'd by thee!

Now scarce is felt the fanning air
Along the valley's sloping side;

* Asiatic Researches, vol. ii. pp. 197-8.

† Royal Asiatic Transactions, vol. ii. p. 393.

Now winds arise, and lightnings glare,
 Pours the fell storm its dreadful tide !
 —While fears and troubles closely prest,
 By thee my love was gladly sought ;
 But once again with quiet blest,
 Thou view'st me as a thing of nought !

The faithless calm shall shift again,
 Another gale the bleak hill rend,
 And every blade shall wither then,
 And every tree before it bend :
 —Then shalt thou wail thy lonesome lot,
 Then vainly seek the injur'd man,
 Whose virtues thou hadst all forgot,
 And only learn'd his faults to scan."

His next work was historical. He found a book in existence called the *Shoo-King*, containing the history of China from the earliest period—from the founding of the monarchy by Yu to the reign of the first emperor of the Chow family. The existence of such a work has been vehemently repudiated by many critics ; but unless we are prepared to deny the statements of the philosopher himself, we must accept its existence as an established fact. Confucius treated it in the same style as he had treated the others, cutting away all redundant parts, and adding notes to bring out the sense of the original. This work is now well known in Europe through the French translation, but it cannot be praised as a model of history. It is rather a chronology, interspersed with occasional details, and richly illustrated with aphorisms, the main of which doubtless proceeded from the pen of Confucius. Here and there conversations occur between the prince and his minister, which are worthy of the highest praise ; but being somewhat stiffly reported, they fall heavy upon the ear of the European. Specimens of these will be furnished in later papers.

The greatest work undertaken by Confucius as a commentator—undertaken at this period, and continued up to near the end of his life—was that of editing and rendering clear the *Ye-King*, or great book of philosophy. The Chinese had done their best to account for the existence of Nature—had endeavoured to put their ideas about it into plain forms, so that the theories conceived in their minds should be communicated to others. They had worked out a system of lines and numbers, which, in some mysterious manner, was supposed to explain the origin of things. This was written into the book of Unity, and it had been added to and commented upon so learnedly that nobody cared to read it. Confucius found, on reading it, that with the mere dust and rubbish there was still much that deserved attention, and much of a moral character which was kindred to his own feelings, and hence the earnestness with which he applied himself to its study and elucidation.

Here, however, it is necessary to notice the statement made by Gutzlaff,* that "the work owes its origin to the absence of a belief in the existence of a "Divine Being, the Creator and Preserver of all things." This, and other passages in the same book, lead the reader to the conclusion that Atheism is the foundation of the *Ye-King* philosophy, than which nothing can be more untrue. We are not unmindful of the services, heroism, or purity of character of M. Gutzlaff, but it is necessary to protest against the use of falsehood for any purposes, not even excepting 'sending the Gospel to the

* China Opened, vol. i. p. 433.

'heathen.' There is no doubt that the lines and numbers, with the 'system' of multiplying sixty-four, to find the order of nature' is to our minds absurd, and so are the theories of Pythagoras, but we are not to forget that we are ignorant of the meaning the ancients attached to the symbols; to their minds they conveyed ideas the reverse of what they convey to ours. And it is quite certain that the philosophers who preceded Confucius had very clear ideas of the existence of a Supreme Intelligence. The *Ye-King* contains many sentences in praise of the Deity, and in other ancient works which Confucius edited similar passages are to be found.

To place the matter beyond dispute, we quote the following from the *Shoo-King*, a passage which speaks clearly enough of the Shan-te, or Supreme Being. "He is the Creator of all things that exist; He is independent and "omnipotent; He knows all things, even the most hidden secrets of the heart; "He watches over the motions of the whole universe, wherein nothing happens "but by His ordinance; He is holy; His justice is without limit; He inflicts "signal punishment on the wicked, not sparing even kings, whom He deposes "in His wrath; public calamities are the warnings He gives to mankind to reform "their manners, which is the surest means of appeasing His indignation."*

It would be difficult to add anything to this description, which we have good proof has been received by the Chinese through more than 3,000 years; and in presence of this a more absurd mistake cannot be committed than that of assuming that a people who have such passages liberally scattered through their sacred books, are unconscious of the existence of God, and are without a word which is expressive of Divinity, as several missionaries have declared. It is, however, quite true, as Dr. Morrison and Gutzlaff, with other missionaries, have remarked, that the people are not ready to converse or express opinions about God; they are reserved upon that point, but this may result from other reasons than those the missionaries have assigned. Indeed, we are not left in any state of doubt upon the matter, for an ancient commentator upon the books of Confucius assigns a very fair and satisfactory reason. He says:—"To converse about the Deity, although not wrong in itself, yet might "cause doubts to arise in the mind; for as His nature and ways are deep and "mysterious, it is not easy to discourse clearly concerning them. As future "events are concealed by an impenetrable veil, we ought to be silent respecting them, and attend to our social duties, considering that the Deity will "surely punish our infractions of human laws."

That Confucius entertained opinions similar to this, we know from his works, but we do not pretend to understand the mysteries of the lines and numbers. The study of their meaning was his own private affair, for he was wise enough to declare that the practical in life should be studied with the greatest attention. Busy among these old bamboo books, many bundles of which he wore out by his handling them so much, we now leave him. His disciples were ever ready to assist him to copy or collate; scores of them had abandoned all to follow him, because they believed he was commissioned to show the way to peace and blessedness. They were of the hopeful class, of which, happily, the world is never deficient. They were earnest in their desire to come at truth in relation to life in all its phases and changes; its joys and agonies; its accidents and environments. They stood ever ready to listen. What he said unto them we shall show in the succeeding papers.

P. W. P.

NOTES ON THE SANSKRIT LITERATURE.

AT the head of Sanskrit literature, criticism, in unison with tradition, places the Védas, which the Brahmins regard as revealed by the Supreme Intelligence. We are already in a condition to appreciate, in a philosophical point of view, the interest of these ancient compositions. Human thought probably never sought with so much perseverance and audacity the explanation of those great problems which, for ages past, have not ceased to exercise the intellect of man. Never was language more grave and more precise, more flexible and more harmonious, employed to express images which man invents, to describe what he sees not, and to explain what he cannot comprehend. If the novelty of the conceptions occasionally cause some surprise, it must be attributed to the impotence of the attempts which human reason makes to overleap the bounds prescribed to it. But the sight of those attempts is always one of the most curious which philosophy can exhibit to us; and it is a highly characteristic trait in the history of a people, that the productions of its genius, which are evidently the most ancient, are likewise those wherein the effort of thought, and the inventions of the spirit of system, are carried to the highest pitch. We speak not of the poetry of the Védas, of which we yet possess but short extracts. Like all primitive poetry, it is simple and elevated; but this double character belongs, perhaps, more essentially to it than to that of any other people. Man appears but little in it, at least in the only fragments of it hitherto known to us, and the disorderly movement of his passions disturbs not its calm uniformity. Nature is chaunted there in all her grandeur, and we are not sure that the brilliant scenes, which she brings daily before the eyes of man, ever inspired anything purer and more ideal than the religious hymns of the Védas. Man is, however, not forgotten in the other productions of the religious spirit of India, and the great epopees, in which are delineated the heroic history of the Brahmins and of the warrior caste, display him in the midst of a society which unites the refinement of the most advanced civilization to the simplicity of primitive manners.

The Puránas are the depositaries of the popular mythology. Supported on the Védas, from whence, it is pretended, they were derived, they sing the origin and adventures of the more material deities, and who, we may venture to say, are more human than the simple Gods of the ancient books. They are theogonies and cosmogonies, in the sequel of which is related the heroic history of the two glorious dynasties, who divided betwixt them the empire of Northern India, and which completes the compendium of the religious and moral duties imposed on mankind in this life. The Puránas are, as it were, Encyclopædias of the creeds and of the science of India.

The most respected of the books of law, that of Menu, passes as a revelation from Brahma, the Creator of the world, and the God of wisdom. This code takes up man at the moment when he comes from the hands of his Author, and conducts him through all the periods of his terrestrial existence, up to the highest degree he can possibly reach, supreme enfranchisement and repose in the bosom of the Deity. Beside the code of Menu, the Hindus place other codes, which have not all reached us entire, but the fragments of which prove with what care the relations of the different members composing the society had been fixed, and what importance civil rights possessed in the eyes of the most ancient sages: for it is the Brahmins, whom tradition reveres as the first institutors of the society, to whom these collections are ascribed, the imputed antiquity of which is not surpassed by that of the

Védas. The works on civil law have given birth to one of the richest departments of Sanscrit literature, and skilful commentators have applied themselves to the interpretation of these venerable monuments, and to the solution of the difficulties which result from their application, at the present day, to a social state similar in its principle to that for which these codes were compiled, but which, nevertheless, from the lapse of time, and the shocks of repeated and violent revolutions, must have undergone important modifications.

If we quit religious creeds and legislation, in order to cast a glance upon the more liberal products of the intellect—philosophy and literature properly so called—we meet with compositions not less extensive. Philosophy does not detach itself from religion, it is true, with so much ease in India as in the West. With some exceptions, it reposes upon revelation, and holds out to the pursuit of truth the same recompense that religion promises to faith. But although chained down to the two terms of its development, Hindu philosophy does not treat with the less freedom every question which ancient wisdom embraced in its researches: in the past, the origin of the world; in the present, the faculties and passions of man; in the future, his destiny and that of the universe, and, above all, his relations with the Supreme Intelligence whence every thing has emanated, and to which every thing returns. This is the inexhaustible topic of those profound philosophical speculations, in which the facts of every science are mixed and compounded together—natural philosophy and psychology, natural history and metaphysics; but in which, at the same time, a modern analyzer cannot restrain his admiration at the grandeur of thought and originality of invention.

Those habits of meditation, which suppose, at the same time that they develope, the most powerful faculties of the intellect, have not exclusively occupied the sages of India; and in transporting them into their ideal sphere of abstraction, they did not become cold and insensible to the sight of the emotions of the human soul, which awakens, amongst every people, the sentiment of poetry. The Hindus have been as much poets as philosophers; possibly, they may have been philosophers only because they were poets. Amongst them, every idea becomes animated with the hues of poetry; every discourse is, as it were, a hymn. A rich and flexible language lends to the strains of the poet an inexhaustible supply of images and forms of expression. Naturalness and grandeur in thought, splendour and simplicity in diction, are some of the characteristics of this brilliant poetry, whose beauties are more easily felt than they can be defined.

Amidst these ample stores, we have to lament one defect, the absence of a history of the nation whose glory they will perpetuate. We are, indeed, ignorant to a certain extent, of the political history of ancient India, but we may reasonably consider it to be very ancient. The toil of ages can alone have accumulated these gigantic cosmogonies, these immense poems, these profound treatises upon philosophy and legislation. Scepticism has, however, attacked the mythical history of India with an ardour equal to the frigid obstinacy with which the Brahmins assert its truth; and, since their long mythological periods attribute to the Hindu civilization an incredible antiquity, there has been a reluctance to acknowledge that they possess anything ancient. Good sense, however, which condemns the habitual exaggerations of the Oriental mind, and which still admires its poetry and the boldness of its conceptions, should place bounds to scepticism; cautiousness, which is in all matters a merit, is in this a duty; and it is not too much to require of the critic that he should hear and learn before he passes judgment.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE PSALMS 'OF DAVID.'

(Continued from p. 48.)

ISAIAH also represents the Seraphim as chaunting the praises of Jehovah in alternate strains.* In illustrating the sublime style of the Hebrew ode, Bishop Lowth† adverts to the induction of the ark to Mount Sion by David, which occasioned the twenty-fourth Psalm, wherein is exhibited a most splendid and perfect specimen of the poetic responses in question. The procession arrives at the gates of the Tabernacle. While the ark is brought in, the Levites, divided into two choirs, sing alternately the concluding part of the Psalm :—

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates!
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors!
And the King of Glory shall enter.
Who is this King of Glory?
Jehovah, mighty and powerful,
Jehovah, powerful in war.
Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
And be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors!
And the King of Glory shall enter.
Who is this King of Glory?
Jehovah of hosts, he is the King of Glory.”

It has been stated, with regret, that Bishop Lowth did not more fully pursue this subject in his nineteenth lecture; that although the performance of hymns by two alternating choirs was the most usual practice, yet, the parallelism of sentences extended much further in the Hebrew poetry. There were sometimes three alternate choruses. A specimen of this occurs in the one hundred and thirty-fifth Psalm. The High Priest, with the house of Aaron, constitute the first choir; the Levites serving in the Temple, the second; and the congregation of Israel the third. Each of these has a distinct part, and all unite in chorus at intervals. This Psalm has, therefore, been arranged in the following manner.

PROASM, OR PRELUDE, PART I.

High Priests and Priests, to the Levites :

Praise ye Jah!

Levites, to the Priests :

Praise ye the name of Jehovah!

Priests and Levites to the Congregation :

Praise Him, O ye servants of Jehovah!

The Congregation, to the Priests :

Ye that stand in the house of Jehovah!

The Congregation, to the Levites :

In the courts of the house of your God!

PROASM, PART II.

Priests, to the Levites :

Praise ye Jah, for Jehovah is good.

Levites, to the Congregation :

Sing praises unto His name, for it is pleasant.

*Congregation, joining with Priests and Levites :*For Jah hath chosen Jacob unto Himself,
Israel for His peculiar treasure.

* Isaiah vi, 3.

† Leech, xxvii.

HYMN.—I.

High Priest, followed by the Priests :

For I know that Jehovah is great,
Even our Lord above all gods.

Levites : Whatsoever Jehovah pleased,
He did in heaven, and in earth,
In the seas, and in deep places.

Congregation : He causeth the vapours to rise from the ends of the earth,
He maketh the lightnings for the rain ;
He bringeth the wind out of His treasures.

High Priest, accompanied by the Priests :

Who smote the first-born of Egypt,
Both of man and of beast.

Levites : Sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt ;

Congregation : Upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.

High Priest and Priests :

Who smote great nations, and slew mighty kings ;

Levites : Sihon, king of the Amorites,
And Og, king of Bashan,
And all the kingdoms of Canaan.

Congregation : And He gave their land an heritage,
An heritage with Israel His people.

Priests : Thy name, O Jehovah, endureth for ever.

Levites : Thy memorial, O Jehovah, throughout all generations.

Priests, Levites, and Congregation, in full chorus :

For Jehovah will judge His people ;
And will repent Him concerning His servants.

II.

High Priest, accompanied by the Priests :

The idols of the Heathen—silver and gold ;
The work of mortal hands.

Levites : They have mouths, but they speak not ;
Eyes have they, but they see not.

Congregation : They have ears, but they hear not ;
Neither is there any truth in their mouths.

Priests, Levites, and Congregation, in full chorus :

They that make them are like unto them ;
Every one that trusteth in them.

ANTISTROPHE.

High Priest and Priests, to the Congregation :

Bless Jehovah, O house of Israel !

Congregation, to the High Priest and Priests :

Bless Jehovah, O house of Aaron !

High Priest and Priests, to the Levites :

Bless Jehovah, O house of Levi !

Levites, to High Priest and Priests :

Ye that fear Jehovah, bless Jehovah !

Priests, Levites, and Congregation, in full Chorus :

Blessed be Jehovah out of Zion,
Who dwelleth in Jerusalem.

Full chorus : Praise ye Jah !

There is a set of Psalms, commonly called the "Psalms of Cursing," or as the critics call them, 'Imprecatory,' which are worthy of our attention, both in respect of their nature and authorship. Taken as a whole, from the mildest to the most bitter, they number four—of the strongest imprecatory character—and probably all of them proceeded from the same pen, which there are reasons for believing to have been the pen of Jeremiah. As compositions, they surpass in vindictiveness all Roman writings, and it could only be under the severest sufferings that any human being could so far forget all human tenderness, as to be able to write them. But a few passages, as fair specimens of the whole, will best reveal their nature:—

"Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness;
I look for pity, but there is none, for comforters, but find none.
For my food they gave me gall,
And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.
May their table be to them a snare;
May it be a trap to them while they are at ease;
May their eyes be darkened that they may not see,
And cause their loins continually to shake;
Pour out upon them thine indignation,
And may the heart of thine anger overtake them!
Let their habitation be desolate,
And let none dwell in their tents!
For they persecute those whom thou hast smitten,
And talk of the pain of those whom thou hast wounded.
Add iniquity to their iniquity,
And let them never come into thy favour;
Let them be blotted out of the book of the living;
Let not their names be written with the righteous."*

But with all the bitterness there are passages in this poem which redeem it from the charge of mere blindness and fury. The author was prepared to "praise 'Jehovah with a song,'" and evidently felt that in all this cursing he had been doing a very amiable work. He declared that, 'to magnify Jehovah with a song' was much better than to offer 'an ox or a bullock that hath horns and hoofs,' and pious souls of modern ages are delighted at finding 'such pure ideas of religion.' Their delight, however, is out of place, for it is impossible to overlook the coarse ideas with which 'the pure ones' are associated. They smack rather too much of the spirit that prompted the St. Bartholomew Massacre, and then, having wiped its hands and mouth, went up to the Churches 'to praise the Lord for his loving-kindness and great charity.'

But the one hundred and ninth Psalm is by far worse than this I have quoted, as the following will show. I quote from the best modern version, that of Dr. Nuyes:—

"Oh God of my praise be not silent!
For the mouths of the wicked and deceitful are opened against me;
They speak against me with a lying tongue.
They assault me on every side with words of hatred;
They fight against me without a cause,
For my love they are my adversaries,
Although I prayed for them.
They repay me evil for good, and hatred for love!
Set thou a wicked man over mine enemy,
And let an adversary stand at his right hand!
When he is judged may he be condemned,
And may his prayer be accounted a crime!
May his days be few, and another take his office!
May his children be fatherless and his wife a widow!

* Psalm lxxix.

May his children become vagabonds and beggars,
 And seek bread far from their ruined dwellings!
 May a creditor seize upon all that he hath,
 And may a stranger plunder his substance!
 May there be none to show him compassion;
 And none to pity his fatherless children!
 May his posterity be cut off!
 In the next generation may his name be blotted out!
 May the sins of his fathers be remembered by the Lord!
 And may the sin of his mother never be blotted out!
 May they be before the Lord continually;
 And may He cut off their memory from the earth!
 Because he remembered not to show pity,
 But persecuted the afflicted and the poor man,
 And sought the death of the broken-hearted.
 As he loved cursing let it come upon him;
 As he delighted not in blessing let it be far from him!
 May he be clothed with cursing as with a garment;
 May it enter like water into his bowels; like oil into his bones!
 May it be to him like the robe that covereth him,
 Like the girdle with which he is constantly girded!
 May this be from the Lord the recompense of mine adversaries,
 And of all them that speak evil against me!"

I pause here, where the bitterness of the cursing ends, to remark, that if the religious people of Scotland had fairly read this terrible curse before condemning Burns's 'Holy Willie's Prayer,' they would probably have held their tongue, for I would defy the greatest satirist to produce anything in the shape of ironic satire, directed against prayer, which could equal this curse in the mild form of an inspired petition to the God of mercy and love. Then, too, the way in which the author asks good for himself, in countenance, is precisely in Holy Willie's tone:—

"But do thou, O Jehovah, my God, take part with me
 For thine own name's sake! Great is thy mercy, O deliver me!
 For I am afflicted and poor, and my heart is wounded within me!
 I am going like a declining shadow, I am cast out as a locust;
 My knees are weak from fasting, and my flesh is wasted away;
 I am a reproach to mine enemies, they gaze at me and shake their heads.
 Help me, O Jehovah, my God!
 O save me according to thy mercy!
 Let them know that this is thy hand!
 That thou, O Lord, hast done it.
 Let them curse, but do thou bless!
 When they arise let them be put to shame,
 But let thy servant rejoice!
 May my enemies be clothed with ignominy;
 May they be covered with their shame as with a mantle!
 I will earnestly praise the Lord with my lips;
 In the midst of the multitude I will praise Him!
 For He standeth at the right hand of the poor,
 To save him from those who would condemn him!"

Such is the one hundred and ninth Psalm, with its prayers and curses, its hatred, its malignity, and selfishness, and in the whole round of so-called heathen writing, I am satisfied that no parallel can be found, either in its intensity of hate, or its want of all touches of human tenderness.

(To be continued.)

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INSPIRATION OF THE EVANGELISTS.

WE have now to examine the statement that the Four Gospels were written by Inspiration. It should be admitted at the outset, that, judging from modern intimations to that effect, the theory of their being inspired productions is no longer believed by learned clerical writers—at least, not in the form in which that theory was formerly taught in the Churches, and is even now believed by the great majority of uneducated Christians. They admit it to be untenable, but, unfortunately, not without attempting to cover their admission with a veil of indefinite phrases, which deceive their followers.

They serve God and Mammon in this matter. They employ the forms of Reason while insisting upon the substance of Revelation; they repudiate the old dogmas, and yet use the conclusions to which they led. It has been said of men, that if they would not work, neither should they eat; and applying the law to these double-faced speakers, it should be said unto them, If ye will not assert the old theory of inspiration, neither shall ye eat the fruit thereof. If they deny the substance, why cleave unto the shadow it cast? The time has gone by when men could be permitted to wear two faces under one hat without being reproached for their self-delusion or dishonesty.

The doctrine of Inspiration, as taught in the Creeds, and conceived by the great majority of Christians, is that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; not their own thoughts, conclusions, and experience, but such ideas, facts, and doctrines as were infused into their minds by the Spirit of God; that they wrote not as ordinary historians, collecting and arranging materials, and then deciding according to the weight of evidence what facts they should use. We are bound to conclude, says a great Church authority, "that the Evangelists were supernaturally enabled to make a proper selection from the great mass of materials; and that they were directed to record such things as were best calculated to convey a just idea of the religion of Christ."* A modern Evangelical writer, whose fame is in all the congregations, says that Inspiration is 'that mysterious power once exerted by the Divine Spirit on the authors of Holy Writ, to guide them even in the choice of the words of which they have made use, and to guard them alike from all error and all omission.'† This, for all practical pur-

* Bishop Tomline. Elements of Christ. Theol. Par. II. c. 1.

† Théopneustie, ou Inspiration, plénières des Saintes Ecritures. Par Le Gausson.

poses, is the same as saying in other words, that the Gospels were written by God Himself. They form a portion of His literary labours, for in such a case the work performed by the accredited authors was in no degree superior to that of amanuenses.

Such is the inspiration theory as believed by millions of men, but, as before said, it is not accredited by the intelligent scholars who have endeavoured to discover the meaning of what is written. Neander argues to the effect that it must be regarded as a great boon conferred by Protestant theology upon both faith and science "that the old mechanical view of Inspiration has been "so generally abandoned;" adding, "that doctrine, and the forced harmonies "to which it led, demanded a clerk-like accuracy in the Evangelical accounts, "and could not admit even the slightest contradiction in them; we are now no "longer compelled to have recourse to subtleties against which our sense of "truth revolts."* The latter clause in this admission indicates how clearly he comprehended that spirit of lying, which has hitherto superintended the composition of 'Gospel-harmonies.' But, although the correctness of his statement is acknowledged by men as learned as himself, the admission is not made in the pulpits. There is still an esoteric doctrine; there are still mysteries for the learned to which the ignorant are not to be admitted, lest, per-adventure, becoming wise in such matters, they should become free also.

It is, however, quite possible that they who speak upon the subject have not made up their minds as to the exact meaning of the term. For instance, the present Dean of Canterbury contradicts himself frequently, even upon the same page of his justly celebrated edition of the Greek Testament. He says that "the three first Gospels are not formal, complete accounts of the whole "incidents of the sacred history, but each of them fragmentary, containing "such portions as fell within the notice of the Evangelist."† But, when commenting upon Luke, he says that 'the reporter,' upon whose "authority "the Evangelists wrote, was no other than *the Holy Spirit himself*, whose "special guidance was promised in bringing to mind the things said by "Jesus."‡ In another place he speaks of Luke as "a faithful and honest "compiler;" words which can have but one meaning; yet upon the same page he declares that "Luke's account is stamped with the authority of the "witnessing and discriminating Spirit dwelling in the Apostles."§ How can a man be called a faithful and honest compiler who compiles nothing more than he is instructed—who never writes a word more than by a superior power he is made to write? We have the right to expect from Dean Alford something more definite and less contradictory, for, possessing both the power of utterance, and the body of knowledge, he must be able at least to tell what are his meanings, and which theory it is he desires to support.

Apart, however, from the question of scriptural words, we find that scholars are agreed that each of the New Testament books bears the unmistakable evidence of its human author. Reading a volume of Shakspeare, Chaucer, Milton, Bacon, Southey, Byron, Thackeray, Dickens, Maurice, or Carlyle, we cannot fail to perceive a number of sufficiently marked peculiarities in the style of each to prevent our mistaking the work of one for that of another. No well-read man is likely to mistake Byron's poetry for Wordsworth's, or Carlyle's prose for that of Maurice, and the same must be said not only of the Gospels, but of all the New Testament books; there are peculiarities of style and diction in each which are

* Life of Jesus. Introd. § 7.

† Luke x. 14.

+ Prolegomena, § vi. 1.

‡ Jour. Sacred Liter., April 1855, p. 96.

so distinctly marked that no careful reader can mistake one Gospel for the other.

The above-quoted Dean Alford has ably proved this, both in his edition of the Greek Testament, and, in a more popular form, in one of his lectures. In the latter, he says of the writers, "Their mental character, bound up as it always is with physical temperament, and the incidents of life, appear as clearly in their writings, as does that of ordinary writers in theirs. The style and habit of thought of St. Paul differs as entirely from that of St. Peter—and and those of St. James from both—and those of St. John again from all—as the style and habit of any mere human author from those of another."* Gaussen, also, without appearing to perceive the consequences of his argument, exults in this mark of human working. He says, "So far are we from disavowing this individuality, everywhere stamped upon our sacred books, that, on the contrary, it is with the deepest gratitude and an ever-growing admiration that we reflect on that living, real, human, dramatic character, extending with so powerful a charm through every portion of the word. Yes, we rejoice in saying, in the language of our opponents, here is the phrase, the love, the accent, of Moses; there of St. John; they can be recognised, heard, and seen."†

This important fact is not only generally admitted, but is most skilfully employed by the Biblical Critics to assist in establishing the truth of the Gospel history. They argue, that as each book bears the marks of individuality, so the authors are all to be viewed as independent witnesses; that as by his style of composition, each writer manifests that he was perfectly independent in his composition, we may not say we have one only, but that they are so many distinct authorities. It is a very proper argument, faithful alike to common-sense, and to the laws of sound criticism. But whoever urges it, whether he knows it or not, gives up the theory of special Inspiration, for practically, he abandons the idea that the books were written by 'chosen men according as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' They could not be both free and bound. If in their writing they were directed by a superior power, then there could be no marks of their own individuality; and if it be true, as undoubtedly it is, that such marks are visible, then we cannot reasonably believe them to have been Heaven-directed in the manner generally asserted.

It must not, however, be overlooked that the attempt has been made to harmonise these statements. For instance, it is said that 'they were not verbally inspired, but inspired only in relation to the ideas they were to convey.' The meaning is, that the Spirit of God put certain ideas into their minds, but left them free to express their ideas in their own language; thus, substantially, their works are to be taken as inspired, although their freedom and style of expression remained in every sense undiminished. The arbitrary character of this assumption is too obvious to need exposure. Who can avoid asking how a third person can be capable of discovering that the ideas expressed by a second were given to him by a first, when no traces of that fact are to be found in the writing, and the writer has not intimated that anything of the kind occurred? It is evident, also, that if the proposition be true, there can be no authority in the writing. We may put ideas into a man's mind, but unless we supervise the writing, we cannot be sure that he has conveyed our meaning. Words are merely the clothes of ideas, and no man can, in writing, convey the ideas of another in a long series so exactly that no correction shall be

* *The Intelligent Study of Holy Scripture.* Ex. Hall Christ. Young Men's Lect. 1853, p. 212.

† *Theopneustie*, p. 84.

required. Thus it follows, that for a written revelation from Heaven to be perfect, the writer must be inspired and guided, not merely in relation to the ideas, but in relation to the language also.

It was the conclusion of Lardner that "the Canon of the New Testament was not determined by the authority of Councils, but the books of which it consists were known to be the genuine writings of the Apostles and Evangelists, in the same way and manner that we know the works of Cæsar, Cicero, Virgil, and Homer; and the Canon has been formed upon the ground of an unanimous or generally concurring testimony, and tradition."* No man was better qualified by his preceding inquiries to express an opinion upon this point, in its historical aspect, than he was. But he should have added, that the Fathers who preserved the books, were guided not by the evidence of their genuineness so much as by the nature of the doctrines they contained. They received or rejected books, without regard to their authors. If the works contained the theories which they were pledged to support, then it was quite certain they would be exalted to the seventh heaven. Ignatius, who must be classed with the earliest Fathers, speaks of the "Christian Consciousness"† as the supreme judge. He advised his people to read the prophets and other good books; but not to receive any which did not completely harmonise with their consciousness. A doctrine which would horrify half the clergy in England, yet none the less deserving of being preached.

That theory of the "supremacy of the consciousness" was cherished in the better days of the Church. It probably led to some errors, and opened a way for some fanaticism; but better a goodly measure of wild life, than mere somnolence and no activity. The people who were allowed to test all by their own consciences were in no danger so long as only moral questions were concerned; but when it became a question of speaking with tongues and prophesying, there was danger. Still, with all the errors, the ultimate result would have been good, had it not been for the growth of a party who were to live by the gifts of the altar, and to administer instruction unto others.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—V.

THE SCHOOLMEN.

LOGIC, like many other things, good in themselves, is capable of being misapplied and prostituted to base uses. Ignorance has been so wide-spread, and even among the educated, the right use of the thinking and reasoning powers has been so little known or attended to, that mankind has furnished but too easy a prey for false and dishonest reasoners in every path of human inquiry. To the evil disposed, the temptation has thus been great, and easy the achievement, to deceive men into accepting falsities as truth; and by reason of the frequency with which this has been done, and the amount of evil and misery caused thereby, a deep-seated hatred of logic has frequently taken possession of the minds of honest men—earnest lovers of the truth; and logicians have, by consequence, been most unjustly classed with sophists. This feeling has led to much misapprehension and misrepresentation with regard to the Schoolmen, with their subtle dialectics and strange logical processes. But the difference between the true logician and the sophist is great—

* Lardner's books, Vol. vi. p. 27.

† Epist. ad Philadelph.

as great as between the wilful deceiver and the earnest truth-seeker; and if there were many of the former, there were also not a few of the latter among the Schoolmen. The sophist, truly, uses the same means as the logician, but it were as honest and fair to compare the mad Malay who runs-a-muck through the streets killing and wounding defenceless passengers, with the patriot who fights in defence of hearth and home, because they both carry sharp-edged weapons. It is true they may carry the same weapons, but nevertheless the one is a murderer, the other a man armed in a just cause; the one abuses, the other uses the instruments of death which he carries. So with the sophist and the logician; the one seeks to kill the truth, the other is the slayer of error. In judging the Schoolmen, it is necessary to bear this distinction in mind; and to remember that both classes had representatives among them.

The ends proposed to be achieved by logic rightly used are well worthy; and it would be well had the achievement thereof been more successful. Logic is the hewer and modeller of the stones which go to build up the temple of truth; and many a rough-hewn truth has been rejected because the would-be builders have been destitute of the needful instruments of labour, or have made wrong use of them. So it has not unfrequently happened that men have disputed and fought over what was true, merely because in using vague terms, capable of different meanings, they have been led to mistake the aims of those they have opposed. In the eternal squabbles of the Schools we have an illustration of this; for many of the disputes which lasted for centuries were rather about words than ideas. If the real meaning which lay beneath the propositions of the disputants—where indeed there was any meaning—had been correctly ascertained preliminary to the commencement of the debate, there would have been no room for discussion at all. We may at once mention, for the comfort of our readers, that it is not our intention to enter into any description of these disputes, or discuss the merits of the questions raised thereby; that would indeed be both an endless and a useless task, and ineffably disgusting to modern intellects. Except so far as any reference thereto may be needed for illustration, we will leave those questions, with the questioners, to sleep the sleep of ages.

The theses upon which these Ineffable Doctors, Perspicuous Doctors, Seraphic Doctors, Subtle Doctors (for such were the ridiculous titles the Schoolmen loved to bestow and receive), expended their intellectual activity were of the most absurd nature, and were only important (speaking generally) as having been the apprenticeship and training of the European mind to the work it afterwards accomplished. Our aim now is to show the relation of the Schoolmen (who were the only representatives of intellect in the Middle Ages) to the Church, and also to call attention to the fact, that out of the intellectual efforts of Scholasticism there grew, in after times, a race of thinkers who sought to raise Reason above Faith, and under the guise of arguments in proof of theological mysteries were undermining—generally, unconsciously, it is true—their only stable basis, the authority of the Church. It is because these things were so, that those ridiculous word-battles, that barren syllogising, which obtained in the Schools, become surrounded with interest to the student, and demand the respect of every one who loves the Truth.

As an example of the matters upon which the Scholastic philosophy expended its resources, and the questions upon which generation after generation of the Schoolmen made it their life-work to dispute, as also as an apt illustration of the way in which, by their consequences, these wordy battles became important to the progress of mankind, we may very briefly call attention to

that grand dispute of the Middle Ages—that between the Nominalists and Realists—about which more was said and written than about any other. The great question between them was, Have both *genera* and *species* a real objective existence? The point in dispute can scarcely be understood, except by those versed in metaphysical subtleties; we will, however, try to make it plain. The one party—and they were the Nominalists—maintained that “all knowledge must proceed from experience, that therefore *individuals* (or in “the language of the schools, *species*) alone had any real existence, and all “*general conceptions* were without objective significance—they were but “abstractions, necessary helps to the understanding, to enable it to grasp the “infinite manifoldness of things.” The proposition supported by this party, put into their own language is: *Nomina non res* (Names are not things). It was from this that their cognomen of Nominalists was derived. The Realists supported the converse of this, and maintained that conceptions, as well as perceptions, had a real objective existence. The dispute is as old as Plato and Aristotle, and as modern as Kant and Fichte. It raged through the Schools for centuries, but would never have obtained the importance it did had not Roscelin allied it to Church doctrine. He used the nominalist arguments to question the objective reality of the Christian Trinity, and the Church found her authority interested in the dispute. It afterwards became the cause of the charge of Polytheism against the Nominalists, it being argued that if they denied general conceptions to have an objective value, the Trinity must resolve itself into three Gods; the idea of God also being “general,” His attributes alone being “special,” if they believed in a Deity at all they must make a God of every attribute. The Church accordingly took up the quarrel; persecution on the one hand, and a consequent antagonism to the Church on the other, thus grew out of this Scholastic quarrel, and a mere wordy dispute became of practical value to humanity.

The distinctive peculiarity of the Schoolmen, as a body, was this, that all their discussions centred upon points of Church doctrine. They sought to prove by philosophical formulæ and logical modes the various dogmas and superstitious notions to which Priestcraft gave the name of Religion; they aimed, in fact, at a rational demonstration of matters having no reasonable basis, and which, to be accepted at all, must be accepted by a blind faith alone. They endeavoured to reduce Theology to a syllogism. What wonder if they failed in their endeavours? For what were they doing in this but seeking to make Reason subservient to Unreason? trying to prove not merely the unprovable, but that which was disprovable? It was the labour of Sisyphus constantly renewed; for centuries they rolled the stone up the logical mountain, but ever it rolled down again, and again the work was renewed, and yet again, but always with the like success. Alas! the process is even now going on; and in the constant attempts made in this nineteenth century to harmonize Science and Theology, we see the deplorable fact exemplified that the race of Schoolmen is not yet extinct, and that we have amongst us men who should have been born seven or eight hundred years ago. Then there would have been some excuse for them; now they must be simply classed as fools or knaves. We, who see further than these old Schoolmen, know that the Theology of the Churches is altogether untenable on reasonable grounds. We know, too, that it has nothing to do with Religion; that its mysteries are man-made, not God-made, and we discard them accordingly. We also know that while there is much of speculative religious truth which the soul of man accepts from faith in its intuitions, and in the God-given

revelation which man finds within himself, yet that nothing so accepted is or can be unreasonable; that is to say, that though reason may fail to demonstrate its truth, yet it is of such a nature that reason marks it with her approval. We believe much we cannot prove, but nothing which is alien to reason. We know that the domains of Faith and Logic are distinct. The Schoolmen sought to make them one, and in so doing attempted an impossible task—impossible but not useless.

These men did not live in vain; for, apart from the fact that by their disputations they were training the nascent intelligence of Europe, they were also proving the uselessness of the endeavour to reconcile the authority and teachings of the Church with the claims of Reason, a fact which in the end not a few of them acknowledged. Thus was the intellect of man directed to nobler fields of inquiry. It is, therefore, this strife between Reason and Authority, between the Spirit of Inquiry and Priestcraft, which the Schoolmen bequeathed to after times. The history of the Church from this point involves the history of the Reformation. Up to the time of the rise of the Schoolmen, in looking through the history of Christendom, we have to trace the growth of the Church of Priestcraft unchecked, and to behold humanity bowing itself in abject humility at the feet of the spiritual despot; from that time the purview becomes at once a more pleasant and a sadder one, for we have still to record a further growth of priestly power, but have also to place side by side therewith the record of continual revolts against it, ending too often, alas! in defeat and misery for the time, but at last succeeding in giving to Priestcraft a blow from which it never will recover. It is true the work even yet is incomplete, but that we have the means of progressing in it we owe to the labours of those who have gone before us.

Those Dark Ages, then, with all their desolation and misery, their darkness and ignorance, form a spectacle worthy of our closest attention, and enlisting our warmest sympathies, in that they present to us the sight of humanity raising itself out of the mire into which priests had thrown it, and walking, even through fire and blood, in the face of persecution, and amid accumulated misery, onwards to the light. In those ages, we mark the first stirrings of the giant awakening to a knowledge of his power, and snapping asunder one by one the chains which had been placed upon him. A noble and an encouraging spectacle for all time; for when we consider the obstacles which had to be overcome, the power which had to be overthrown—when we remember the self-sacrifice which led men to suffer and cast away even life itself in defence of the truth, we cannot fail to learn that humanity is not the despicable thing which priests have ever sought to prove it to be, or to become filled with hope for the issue of that combat which even yet has to be sustained with the old Theology and Priestcraft. Nor shall we say that the accumulated horrors of those mediæval times are without their use as a teaching in other ways; for upon the arena of Europe, after the Fall of Rome, a great experiment had its trial. Then was seen what are the results to mankind of the undivided sway of the priest—then was seen what must necessarily be the outcome of a Religion (if we may so far degrade the word as to use it in such a connection) of superstition and intellectual serfdom, and it is not too much to say that never again in the history of the world, after the example shown by the Dark Ages, will humanity (or such part of it as is now enfranchised) consent to place itself under the sway of a dominant priesthood.

JAS. L. GOODING.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS).

§ 5.—DAYS OF TEACHER LIFE.

CONFUCIUS had a large house, which he opened as a Lyceum to those who chose, without charge, to come and learn what wisdom he could teach them. The rich and poor were equally welcome, for the only condition was the desire to learn, and the practice of a moral life, and unto all he freely poured forth from the rich store of his varied knowledge. He taught them first to have confidence in themselves; many believed it to be utterly impossible they could attain to the possession of his knowledge, believed that he had some peculiar power, some special faculty with which the kind heavens had dowered him, and through which he was enabled to comprehend what must ever pass their understanding. This is the natural thought of timorous youth, and is one that it requires some skill on the part of the teacher without danger to obviate. Confucius met it boldly, declaring that he was not by nature endowed with any superior powers, that he had not travelled by any royal road to knowledge. "I loved, and," said he, "through that I studied the ancient writings; hence came all my knowledge." Thus, as the same mines were accessible to his hearers, all could equally enrich themselves.

Through observation he believed himself to have acquired a knowledge of when it would rain, or, at least, that he had discovered one infallible sign. Upon one occasion, when going out on one of their walks, he advised his attendant disciples to take with them their umbrellas. The sky was fair and clear, giving no sign of rain, but they obeyed, and shortly after it rained very heavily, when all agreed that their master must have supernatural knowledge. Confucius hastened to correct the error and disabuse their minds. "There is nothing supernatural about it," said he, "but simply this, a verse in the Shoo-King says that when the moon rises in the constellation *ps* heavy rain may be looked for. Last night I saw the moon rise in that constellation, and hence my prediction." On several occasions he was called upon, by his strict love of truth, to correct a similar error, and he never failed in the task. Had he done so, the Chinese would have been stored with a long list of miracles of his working; what in their nature were only ordinary events, would have been wrought up into extraordinary violations of natural law. For this he is much to be honoured, seeing that when men are willing to treat another as a God, it can only be through great truthfulness and self-control that he foregoes the honour.

He had no hidden doctrines. The great schools of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, are known to have had two sets of lessons, two degrees of truth, the highest being only for the rarer few, who, through favour, obtained their initiation. They held themselves to be justified by the fact that some truths can only be fairly appreciated by the highest intellects; but overlooked the fact that the said highest intellects could only be discovered when tested by their reception of the higher and grander truths. Confucius had no hidden truth, but made all he knew known unto all, yet giving himself liberty in one particular. He says "If a man make no efforts to develope his own mind, I shall not develope it for him. If a man do not choose to make use of his faculty of speech (so as to convey his ideas in an intelligible manner), I shall not trouble to penetrate the sense of his expressions. If, after having

"enabled him to know one angle of a square, he do not for himself discover the measure of the remaining three, then I shall not repeat the demonstration."

Thus his doctrine was to give unto all equal opportunities; and having done this, the teacher was absolved from further trouble, seeing that they who had fitting capacities would not fail in being able to appreciate the true, whereas, with the others, it would be useless to waste farther time, seeing that Nature intended them for other callings and occupations. He laboured to impress all his pupils with a belief in the superiority of study over meditation. The Hindus are ever insisting upon meditation, upon surrendering up their whole minds to thought upon Brahm, and look with supreme contempt upon the study of ancient writing that has any other object. Confucius taught the contrary, and made study to be infinitely superior to abstract meditation. He said, "I have passed whole days without food, and entire nights without sleep, that I might give myself up to meditation, but it was no use, study is far preferable." Yet, when realities are in question, then "to meditate in silence and to recal to one's mind the meditations of others is good," and "he who devotes himself to the study of the true and the good, with perseverance and without relaxation, will derive therefrom great satisfaction."

That was his own experience of life. He had sought for truth without relaxation, he had driven all foregone conclusions from his mind, and had felt, from the age of fifteen, when he resolved to become a philosopher, that it involved patience, suffering, and persistence to the end.

So this man had become a teacher; for a time he so continued, and then he taught by working, eventually falling back to the grand position of teacher. We call it a grand position, and know full well that it is a solemn one. Alas, for nations when the office of a teacher is despised, and when the teacher is not alive to the solemnity and world-wide importance of his labours. We have men, many men, who rush into the field as though, having a gift of speech, they were fully qualified for the task of teaching. They talk and talk, with ease and grace, and sometimes beauty, but when we examine what was uttered, alas! there is found nothing to satisfy the soul, or ease life of its too heavy burdens. There was no light to guide us on our way, no deep-toned sympathy to warm our hearts to love and duty, and none of the celestial fire that consumes our littleness of prejudice and frees our soul from bonds. Nay, the men did not look upon their speech as intended for any such purpose—it was merely to while away the hours and keep us, perhaps, out of mischievous action. It was intended for display on the one side, and to tickle the ears on the other. Listen to sermon after sermon, and speech after speech, such as are so liberally showered upon us in this great metropolis. We feel, as the men proceed, that they are playing a part, are performing task-work, are merely grinding out daily rations, and are not endeavouring to stir the souls of those who listen. All goes on as regularly as in a factory, but individuality and freedom are not known. It is like a play, and, indeed, our finest speakers are said to have taken lessons from the players, as though the form were everything, and the thing to be said as nothing. Who would charge Paul with having given his time to such pursuits? Who would charge Luther, or Pym, or Tell, or any who spoke words that shook kingdoms and empires into ruin, with having thus prepared themselves for the battle? With them the thought was all, the vehicle was unimportant; it was not a very gentle or artistic oration that Luther delivered before the Council at

Worms, but rugged and trenchant, yet it went to the very heart of the matter at issue, and exhausted the whole bearings of the subject. The heart and mind were both bound to the work, and hence the large results, for although listening to murmuring rivulets has a charm and meaning, yet, when work is to be done, the rude trumpet-blast is best and fittest adapted for stirring us to action.

These illustrations naturally suggest the inquiry, In what position are we to place Confucius as a teacher—not in regard to the value of his doctrines, but considered only in the lower capacity, and as the literary man? Did he equal or surpass the other teachers of antiquity? Were his style and form of conveying his ideas equal or superior to theirs? To answer this, with all the necessary illustrations, would involve the writing of a substantial volume, and therefore we must rest content with suggesting a few thoughts upon the subject, which, however, shall be sufficiently definite to enable us to arrive at a sound conclusion. To that end it will be convenient to state that the various forms of teaching are divisible into classes comprising the sententious, didactic, dogmatic, and pictorial. It was to the first of these that the Chinese sage attached himself.

Confucius may be taken as the greatest teacher the world has known who adopted the sententious style, and who endeavoured to convey his meaning in the fewest possible words. He was a profound reasoner, of quick feeling, of noble sentiments, of the closest observation, and altogether the best-informed man China has ever possessed. There was nothing narrow, selfish, or egotistical about him, and when he spoke it was not for a sect or party, but for mankind. But his teaching was made up of results; the end of all his inquiries was thrown into the form of epigrammatic sentences, and as such it was given forth to the world. Thus one of his pages contains the condensed essence of a volume, and has more just thought in it than can be found in the heaviest tomes of many finished writers. His books are mere tracts, so small that either of them can be read in a few minutes, so far at least as the mere words are concerned, but so large, when we consider the quality of the matter, that many days must be given to each. Take as an illustration the *Ta-hio* or *Grand Study*, the first of the great classical books, which contains only 400 words, and is supposed to contain a complete summary of the nature, aims, and influences of philosophy, with an exposition of how it is to be applied to daily life. Its first proposition is, that "The law of the *Grand Study*, or practical philosophy, consists in developing the luminous principle of reason, which we have received from Heaven, for the regeneration of man, and in placing his final destiny in perfection, or the sovereign good."* The truth of the proposition will not be gainsayed by any man who understands it, but the difficulty lies in getting men to pursue the course of study through which alone they can rise to a due comprehension of its deep meaning and value. Thousands learn to repeat, and are apt in citing his sentences, the same as in our own country men freely quote sentences from the volumes into which the wise sayings of great men have been collected, but they do not understand their true meaning or value. All such works are for the great body of men, and for all practical purposes, worse than valueless. The sentences are like bank-notes which cannot be cashed. They deceive with a show of wealth, but unto those who possess them they are of no real worth. Many will sit for hours reading books of wise sayings, imagining that they can

* The Chinese Empire. Abbe Huo, p. 76.

nourish their minds upon such fare. But it is a fallacy. As the Esquimaux mixes sawdust with his train-oil, in order that it shall not be too strong for the stomach, so with all these wise sayings something else must be mixed, or the learner will never digest them. In fact, in order to do justice to them, the student must first become a philosopher—must attain to the means of working out conclusions for himself; they merely show him the results to be arrived at, but do not show how they are to be reached. It is much the same as giving the school-boy the sum and the result without showing him how to work it. He may be able to say that twelve times twelve are one hundred and forty-four; but, if he be unable to work it out, he is practically as poor in arithmetic as the simplest savage. We are not enriched by what we possess unless mentally we have conquered it. The idiot is poor, though amid the wealth of a palace, and so are they who have these results without the system of working them out.

P. W. P.

HISTORY AND UNDERLYING LAWS.

ANNALS do not constitute History. Dates and events, the mere dry facts of the past, are truly the data wherewith the historian has to deal, but he who deals only with these is not the historian, but the mere annalist. The relation of the latter to the former is the same as the labourer to the master-builder, or better still, as the statistician to the social philosopher: the one provides the materials with which the other is to work. The true historian looks beneath the facts to find the soul of them; he deals not with mere dates and events, but with the principles of which they are the expression, and of the existence whereof they constitute the evidence. Here is a man, for example, who has a keen eye for facts; he registers day by day its occurrences, the births, deaths, and marriages which take place, the way the wind blows, the changes in the thermometer; he can tell you the exact moment at which any particular event occurred; but ask him its meaning, seek from him an explanation of its relation with the events of the yesterday or the morrow, these things he knows not. But there is another man who seizes the facts which this one has collected, and discovers some broad generalization which links them together, exposes the laws which underlie them all, lays bare the great principles they represent. So it is that out of the facts collected through the ages the sciences have been born. As yet, however, we have no science of history. Our histories are all annals, and not complete even as annals; we wait for the man with intellect large enough, with soul broad enough, to comprehend them, and show us the laws which underlie them all.

History is the evolution of principles, and until the historian comes who recognises this, the meaning and teaching of the Great Past which lies behind us will not be comprehended. With regard to much of History, we are in the same position as mankind were with reference to Astronomy ere yet a Copernicus, a Kepler, and a Newton (if indeed Newton be entitled to a place beside the others) had, by means of the aid afforded by the work of Tycho Brahe and the discoveries of Galileo, created a Science out of isolated facts and false theories. We have yet to learn the great central laws of History, the principles which govern the Rise and Fall of Nations. We have yet to learn the relation of all the historic past to this present and to the future time; and so we have, in History, even as formerly in Astronomy there were, theories which fit not the facts. It is true that something has been done,

and the time is ripe for doing more, in relation to this matter; we wait only the man or men who shall reduce the possible into the actual.

Again and again poets have sung of Time the destroyer, and of Death the conqueror. In so doing, however, they have forgotten their mission and betrayed their trust, by giving currency to ideas which are false. Time is not the destroyer, but the great builder; if he destroy, it is but that he may rebuild. Nor is Death the conqueror, for Life ever triumphs over Death.

"Life mocks the idle hate
Of his arch-enemy Death—yea, seats himself
Upon the tyrant's throne—the sepulchre,
And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe
Makes his own nourishment."

Yes! Life, the vital principle, is ever active. The death of the Old is but the birth of the New. Out of the bosom of corruption and decay spring up new forms of life. The forest giants derive their vital juices from the mouldering remains of the forests which existed before them, and out from the grave of the Past springs the life of the Present. The mighty oak, which strikes its roots among the tombs of bygone generations, the little flower which blooms upon the new-made grave, are but types of the great principle which underlies all, the operation of which is found alike in History and in Nature, no less in the moral than in the physical universe.

Truth marches on to Error, Civilization takes the place of Barbarism, Youth presses on to take the place of Age—and what are these but victories of the vital principle? The death of the Old is the condition by which the New is called into life—and Death is no conqueror, but only the conquered. Decay is the beginning of new existence, and Time the great renovator of all things. Not towards destruction and dissolution does God's Universe proceed, but to a constant renewing of itself in higher and better forms; for Progress is the Divine law written all over this world, and found in operation throughout all history. This has always been, is now, and ever will be so. Nothing dies but to renew itself. Even as Life conquers Death in the world of Nature, so Truth ever gains the victory over Error in the world of Thought, while Civilization triumphs over Barbarism in the sphere of History; Time being the condition required in each case. It is the victory of the active principles in Nature, Thought, and History which we see in every new phase of the existence of our earth and of humanity; and wherein we find the promise of a nobler future, hereafter to be achieved by man.

The processes of Nature, the discoveries of Science, and the records of History, all alike prove the truth of this. Does any man doubt this? Let him turn to the facts of geology, and learn there the truth which God has written on the stone walls of this world, learn how the vital principle of organization gradually evolved out of the primæval chaos ever new and higher forms of life, until the earth became fitted to serve as the arena of man's existence and continual progress. Does any man doubt? Let him turn to the records of man's mental advance, and in all the realms of thought he will see that the vital principle of truth has ever been necessary to the continued existence of any system, and however strongly error has been supported, it has ever carried with it the seeds of decay—while truth has been, even as now it is, constantly taking its place. Does any man yet doubt? Let him turn to the pages of history, and find there, in the rise and fall of nations, in every new historic epoch, in the grand onward march of universal man, the same thing exemplified.

JAS. L. GOODING.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE PSALMS OF 'DAVID.'

(Continued from p. 64.)

Who wrote it? I shall not offer you the gratuitous insult of attempting to prove that it was not written by "the direct Inspiration of God," for I am satisfied you are not so blind to the insult implied in that statement as to need argument upon that point. And of those millions who sit in the darkness of believing such gross blasphemy, I must express my belief that they never really and intelligently read the poem, or tried to fathom its meaning, for if they had, then, undoubtedly, long ago, they must have ceased to believe in the inspiratoin theory.

I believe that it was Jeremiah who wrote nearly, if not all, these cursing poems, and, to some extent, the circumstances in which he was placed furnish an apology for his bitterness. That they are in his style is certain, and the following comparison with passages from his works will render that clear unto all:—

Ps. cix. 5. "They have rewarded me evil for good and hatred for my love."

4. "For my love they are my adversaries, but I give myself unto prayer."

9. "Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. 10. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and seek their bread far from their ruined dwellings."

11. "Let a creditor seize all that he hath, and let a stranger plunder his substance," &c.

13. "Let his posterity be cut off; and in the following generation let their name be blotted out."

14. "Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out."

20. "Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the Lord."

Ps. lxix. 2. "I sink in deep mire," &c.

3. "Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God."

7. "For thy sake I have borne reproach."

12. "They that sit in the gate speak against me, and I am the song of the drunkards."

Jeremiah lived in the days when the Israelites were captive and fallen, and when the house of Judah was pursuing the course which inevitably led to the

Jer. xviii. 19. "Give heed to me, O Lord, and harken to the voice of them that contend with me."

20. "Shall evil be recompense for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee, to speak good for them, and to turn away thy wrath from them."

21. "Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and pour out their blood by the force of the sword, and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and be widows, and let their men be put to death; let their young men be slain by the sword in battle."

22. "Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them; for they have digged a pit to take me, and have hid snares for my feet."

23. "O Lord, thou knowest all their counsel against me to slay me. Forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight, but let them be overthrown before thee. Deal thus with them in the time of thine anger."

Jer. xxxviii. 22. "Thy feet are sunk in the mire," &c.

Lam. iv. 17. "Our eyes fail, looking for help in vain."

xv. 15. "For thy sake I have suffered rebuke."

xx. 7. "I am in derision daily; every one mocketh me."

same result for itself. Jeremiah was at daggers drawn with the men in authority, about the course to be pursued after the first invasion under Nebuchadnezzar. He preached hatred to Egypt, and submission to the Chaldeans and so earnest was he in this preaching that the opposite faction shut him up in prison. I abstain from discussing the question, whether he was a wise patriot, who advised what was noblest and best for his countrymen, or whether he was the paid tool of the Babylonians, as so many have asserted. When, in this course of lectures, we arrive at that period of the Hebrew history when he lived, I shall enter into that question; here it is merely suggested as explaining the origin of the Cursing Psalms. Jeremiah was a partizan who could write political ballads; had he lived in the times of Burdett and the Westminster Election, there is no doubt his poems would have figured largely in the literary proceedings. He wrote, out of the bitterness of his heart, against men who had gained a party victory over him, and what he lacked in power to do them harm, he made up by the bitterness of his praying. Thus read, the poems possess the value of revealing the actual condition of Jerusalem just before the Babylonian power wasted it; but when divines insult us by insisting that they are to be read as Divine Revelations, we hardly know which to marvel at most, their blindness and impiety, or the benevolence of the God they blaspheme, as seen in His still permitting them to live. A writer in Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia, says that, "only a morbid benevolence, a mistaken philanthropy, takes offence at these Psalms, for, in reality, they are not opposed to the spirit of the Gospel, or to that love of enemies which Christ enjoined." This is equal to saying that love your enemies means that we should "pray for their death and damnation;" but there is no accounting for the freaks of orthodoxy. It understands plainly enough that the "poor are to be obedient," and that "the Sabbath is to be observed," but does not understand the difference between loving a man, and praying that he may be clothed with cursing as with a garment.

In dealing with the Psalms we must carefully observe the general ideas relating to God which are scattered through them. In them lies much of their real worth to the living, who read, either as a source of strength, or with the view of learning the theology of the ancients; especially to discover whether the highest minds in the Hebrew nation believed what is called the Mosaic system. Here is a passage from the fiftieth, which demonstrates the contrary:—

"I will reprove thee, not for the sake of thy sacrifices,
Nor of thy burnt offerings, which are daily before me.
I will take no bullock from thy stalls;
Nor he goat from thy folds;
For all the beasts of the forest are mine,
And the cattle upon a thousand hills.
I know all the birds of the mountains,
And the wild beasts of the plains are before me.
If I were hungry I would not tell thee,
For the world is mine and all that is therein.
Do I eat the flesh of bulls? or drink the blood of goats?
Offer to God thanksgiving, perform to Him thy vows!
Then when cometh thy day of trouble call upon me,
And I will deliver thee from out of thy dangers,
So that thou shalt live and glory in thy God."

In this Psalm we have as distinct a denial of the Levitical system of sacrifice as it is possible to give. The writer repudiates everything in the shape of formal offering and sacrifice; yet undoubtedly the historical books teach the doctrine of sacrifices. But the true poet cannot abide within the realm of formalism; cannot be bound by the law of gifts and offerings; and hence it is that so frequently the Psalm-writers strike to the heart of the formal system. As instance the next, the fifty-first, where it is said:—

"Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it;
Thou dost not delight in burnt offerings.

The sacrifice thou lovest is a repentant spirit—

The broken and contrite heart thou wilt not despise."

Here, forms and days, times, seasons, services, sacrifices, are all treated with scorn, for the writer has soared above the symbol to the original thought, and hence he could only antagonise, the formality and show which were rapidly eating away all that was good in the state.

The religion of goodness is insisted upon in some of the Psalms as infinitely transcending all else, and thus the persons who are truly and mindfully religious, are spoken of as being the only beings who can stand in the presence of the Eternal.

"Who shall ascend into the mountains of Jehovah?
And who shall stand in the seat of His holiness?
He whose hands are innocent and whose heart is pure;
Who hath not put his trust in vanity.
Nor sworn for the purpose of deceiving;
He from Jehovah shall receive a blessing,
And righteousness from the God of salvation."

'He whose hands are innocent and whose heart is pure shall receive the blessing,' and what more need be said? It is another way of saying, He is the religious man who lives uprightly. It is quite true that in this Bible we can find passages in abundance which embody in a few words everything that is essential to religion, and passages also which are directly the reverse. But when lost we our right to choose between them? Were we all left to our own judgment we should not, as now, go so far astray; but, unfortunately, a body of self-elected men have added systems and theologies which cast a dark cloud over the mind, and leave their victims incapable of exercising their natural freedom. We get crammed with theological notions before we begin to read the books from whence these notions are supposed to have been derived, and hence in reading, we see rather what we are previously told is there, than what is really written. The writer of this Psalm was no system-monger, but a veritable human being, who taught what is as true for our own age as it was for his. Faith and forms were to him but as the bog-lights, which seem to guide, but never do so, and which cannot be honestly placed in the stead of noble and generous actions. Eloquence may dwell upon the beauty and redeeming power of this faith, of this soul-belief; but as thought which is not followed by action is unproductive, so this eloquence must fail to impart vitality to the dead form it bears about as though it were Divine. The eloquent may delude the world upon the point, but cannot reform it. Like the drugmongers who administer opium to lull pain and deceive the ignorant into believing that thereby a great good has been achieved (whereas nothing more has been done than to still the voice which told of the evil, without doing anything to remove the evil itself), so these spiritual drugmongers silence the voice of conscience by administering doses of eloquence upon Faith without 'the filthy rags of works,' and as a natural result the evils remain unchecked, and religion seems powerless to heal. Let them teach of work, of clean hands and innocent lives, and behold a cure will follow.

There are several Psalms which teach the doctrine of Special Providence, but in language which raises it far above the ordinary forms. Take, for instance, the eighteenth, which may be viewed as an ode written after some great success. The writer opens with a declaration that he will call upon God—that God who had already delivered him—who stands as his rock, his fortress, his buckler and tower of defence:—

"The sorrows of death girt me round about,
And the power of the ungodly filled me with fear.
The sorrows of Sheol encompassed me about,
And the snares of death lay upon my path.
In my distress I called upon Jehovah;
In His temple He heard my voice,

My cry entered unto His ear and He arose.
 Then the earth shook and was alarmed,
 The foundations of the hills trembled in terror,
 For the wrath of Jehovah was hot against them.
 Before His face a smoke ascended,
 A flame burned brightly, obscuring His presence;
 And great fires were kindled by its fervent heat.
 He bowed the heavens and came down,
 And dark clouds were beneath His feet.
 He rode upon the pinions of the Cherubim,
 And flew upon the wings of the wind,
 In a veil of darkness He concealed Himself;
 A pavilion encompassed Him about, a pavilion
 Of dark water and thick clouds of ether,
 From the brightness before Him thick clouds passed along,
 Hailstones and burning fires.
 Jehovah thundered in the heavens;
 And the most high God sent forth His voice.
 He shot out His arrows and dispersed mine enemies,
 His thunder He multiplied and confounded them."

The fact that, through a storm, a victory was gained, is plain enough, but it is equally plain that the writer viewed the storm as a Divine interposition, which we can understand as natural to the age and its religious ideas.

But were we to confine our attention to such passages, our conception of the Hebrew Psalm-writers' views of God would be false. The idea is very frequently expressed that the Infinite dwells in a temple and has a local habitation, but the true poet could not allow himself to remain confined within such a narrow circle of thought. The Greeks had conceived a God of All; the Egyptians and Persians were not behind them in the thought of Universal Power, and it would be strange if the Hebrews in this particular were to form an exception to all the ancient nations. That they were not will be seen by the following passage from the hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm:—

"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?
 And whither shall I flee from thy presence?
 If I ascend the heavens, thou art there;
 If I make my bed in the abyss, lo, thou art there!
 If I take the wings of the morning,
 And dwell in the extreme parts of the ocean;
 There also thy hand shall lead me,
 And thy right hand shall hold me."

'Thy right hand shall hold me!' Here the idea of God everywhere is mated with the idea of His ever acting to preserve His children. This the Greek never conceived, but with the Hebrew, although limited to those of his own race, it was an ever-present thought.

(To be continued.)

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RELIGIOUS MYSTERIES.

THE ignorant man is loud in his complaints that life is a kind of mockery, mainly composed of disappointments and insuperable difficulties, and these he very naturally treats as the parents of a numerous progeny of miseries. There are hours when he will admit, that, as the gloom of winter may be occasionally relieved by glorious bursts of sunshine, so life may be irradiated and rendered joyous; but the words have not long gone forth from his lips before he resolves to add, as his commentary upon them, that they are but momentary blessings, which vanish hastily away, and leave the evils to remain as masters of the scene.

Unhappily such men look only upon one side of the shield, before pronouncing upon the colour of both. They can taste the bitterness of the medicine, but cannot conceive the advantages to the body which may follow its use. They utterly fail in recognising the educational value of disappointment, and the strength-imparting power of difficulty; they impeach both, and decree their condemnation, precisely the same as the poor savage condemns winter, without ever attempting to comprehend its intrinsic value. But in addition to this, and which is of even more importance, they close their eyes to the fact that man creates more difficulties than he finds in nature. He is the author of nine-tenths of the impediments which lie upon his path to retard his progress. Immediately following upon the demonstration by a scientific man of some new truth, there is heard a chorus of voices, all joining in the exclamations, "How beautiful and simple! How clear and valuable!" and then all begin to marvel that what was so plain and easy to be understood was not discovered at an earlier date.

There is no cause left for wondering at the lateness of the revelation when we consider the fact, that it is the fixed habit of man to create difficulties, which, as veils, he hangs over the truth. He starts with a theory, and persists in looking at nature through its mists, thus he perceives not the thing which is, but only the image of his own theory. The mystery was not in the object, but in his own mind. Nature stood ready to show the truth, but he was not ready to use his unaided vision. Thus, the difficulty which had to be conquered lay in himself, and immediately he dared to see for himself, the whole truth in all its simplicity and beauty stood revealed before him.

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Thus we come back to the fact, that in order to learn rightly, man must become as a little child, ready to admit the fact of his having no knowledge, and ready to receive the instruction which nature will bestow. Could we all summon up courage to admit our ignorance, to lay our theories aside for a time, so that we should look at the bare facts of every case, we cannot but believe nine-tenths of the contradictions would perish out of the world, and we should come to know more of nature and of man. The greatest difficulty the reformer has to contend with is not the wickedness of man's heart, as theologians say, but the all-controlling authority of established theories. We feel it is not in men's love of evil that the power of bad systems rests, but in their foregone conclusions, which restrain them from paying attention to the facts and arguments adduced in favour of a change. The great mass of men believe themselves to be already in the right, and, consequently, that it will prove nothing more than a waste of time to pay attention to any new methods. If we conquer that conclusion, or even succeed in raising a doubt about its soundness, all is well, for then they will be ready to listen, and will be open to conviction. We have good material to work upon, although it requires very careful handling. And herein lies the great power of questioning. If we compel a man to prove his own theory to be true, we do more to prepare the way of inquiry than can be effected in any other manner, for by that method we lead him to perceive that what he calls facts are nothing more than the reflected images of his own theories, and that all the difficulties he has complained of as retarding his progress, depended more upon his own errors than on the nature of things.

The Roman Catholic Church has no monopoly of mysteries. In all lands and ages the priest has depended for a considerable share of his influence upon the magical power of the mysterious; and its power, although much has been done by way of destroying various superstitions, is as widely exercised as it was in the prouder days of Egyptian history, when millions bent down at the sacred name of Osiris, or when in Syria the people offered up their first-born to satisfy the cravings of Moloch. It is fondly supposed that in Protestant countries there are no traces of this evil; but the hope is cherished without sufficient cause, for in them, as well as in Catholic lands, we hear much of the sacred mysteries of religion, and of the incomprehensible character of its several parts. A careful inquiry into this matter seldom fails in leading the student to the discovery that fully nine-tenths of the mystery lies, not so much in the nature of the subject itself, as in the theories with which it has been hedged round. The mystery is not of God's wisdom and appointment, but of man's folly and creation. We create the difficulties which retard our progress, and then turn round to make complaints of the hardness of our fate in being constrained to believe what we cannot comprehend.

It is not meant, however, that there are no difficulties in the way of comprehending any fact or feature associated with Religion, for, as every reflective man must be persuaded, there are matters associated with it, as with Love, Art, Thought, and our Creative Energies, which, especially in our present condition of ignorance, must remain inscrutable. They are not absolutely insoluble. Man will grow in knowledge and wisdom until he has become quite as familiar with the nature of these, as we are with the chemical nature of various bodies which formerly enslaved our ancestors. But to achieve an end so desirable, we must first sweep away the impediments which idle imagination has thrown upon the path. As in the old time, the satyrs, and ghosts, and giants, and other fanciful beings had to be swept out of man's mind before he

could march upon and conquer this planet, so the satyrs, in the shape of mysteries of human creation, which lie upon the religious path, must be removed in order that the march of mind in the world of religion may not be retarded. For while confessing the fact that there are to us insoluble mysteries which lie in the nature of things, it still remains true that their number has been largely multiplied through human folly; for many are believed as veritable truths which have no foundation save in the heated fancy and overwrought imagination of misguided men.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—VI.

ABELARD.

ABELARD was born at Palais, in Brittany, in the year 1079; and may be looked upon as the father of rational philosophy. Receiving his training from the heretic Roscelin, he early learnt to bring his reason to bear upon the questions with which he occupied himself, and a spirit of free inquiry pervaded all his speculations and teachings. Early in life he obtained extraordinary celebrity as a Professor of Logic, and he stands as the most celebrated of the early Schoolmen. His spirit of free inquiry led him first to question the philosophical dogmas of his time, and afterwards to seek out some reasonable ground on which to base his theology. How boldly he did this is evinced in a work of his, entitled "*Sic et Non*" (Yes and No), still extant—a work justly considered the most remarkable of its age, in which we perceive at once the revolution in thought of which Abelard was the exponent, and the reason why the Church marked him as a heretic. The key note of this work is that truth is only to be arrived at through doubt and free inquiry—a teaching which we may well believe would scandalise the Church.

In the introduction to his work, Abelard broadly and boldly lays down the principle that only by assiduous and frequent questioning can wisdom be obtained: "For it is doubt," he says, "that leads us to inquire, and 'inquiry that brings us to the possession of truth.'" In this we have one of the earliest gleams of that spirit which afterwards overthrew the despotism of authority. The work itself consists of collocated passages from the Scriptures and the Fathers of the Church, bearing upon the various doctrines to which the name of Christian had been given, and which appeared to be of contradictory import. It was, in fact, an attempt to set forth both sides of every doctrinal teaching—to give the 'yes' side by side with the 'no.' Abelard does not seek to reconcile the contradictions, but contents himself by leaving them for inquirers to solve for themselves, quoting both the authority of Aristotle and of the Bible to prove that the surest road to truth is through doubt, adding that the Christian faith itself would be based more firmly on the conclusions of logic than on the dogmas of authority. He would have men, he said, follow the teaching of Christ, "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." There is not the slightest reason to suppose that Abelard was led by any sceptical spirit in this matter; in those ages of faith, that was next to impossible; but he had a firm belief in the power of logic to educe the truth. Thus while he did not say, and probably did not believe, that aught which the Church taught as truth was falsehood, he refused to place an intellectual chain on men by saying, "Believe without inquiring;" but, on

the contrary, said, "Inquire, and prove its truth for yourselves." A very inconvenient doctrine for the Church; and he soon found to his cost that all true Churchmen regarded him as an enemy.

But it was when Abelard composed his treatise "On the Divine Unity and Trinity" that his battle with the priesthood commenced. His purpose in this work was to illustrate, by "resemblances drawn from human reason," the "sublime mystery" of the Trinity; to prove logically this fundamental article in the creed of the Church. And was not that a worthy aim? He, doubtless, thought it was; but Priestcraft thought differently. What would result if this man were allowed to bring into the arena of discussion the peculiar mysteries of the faith? what might not come of this impudent attempt to bring to the test of logic that which rested on quite other grounds than rational proof? was it to be tolerated that that which was in its very nature incomprehensible should be made the subject of argument? Such were the questions asked, and in the answer, which every "good Christian" would, of course, give, Priestcraft saw its advantage over Abelard.

From the beginning there has ever been war between the Old and the New, the New marching on to the Old, and the Old struggling for a still longer existence among men. The present may, indeed, be likened to a bank and shoal, behind and beyond which flow the mighty Oceans of the Two Eternities—Past and To Come. The latter ever impinging and gaining on it, but the former, too, with never-ceasing recoil, washing over and seeking to submerge it. Or it may be termed the battle-ground whereon the young and vigorous new-births of Time meet, and struggle with, and vanquish the veteran forces of the time that is gone. Look where we will in history, we see this struggle going on—never ending, for it is the expression of the Eternal Law of Progress. Look where we will in the worlds of nature and of thought, no less than in the course of history, and this constant conflict of diverse forces is found; it was, therefore, to be looked for in the evolution of theological systems no less than elsewhere. This conflict has its representative men in every age, and under differing circumstances they get named Catholics and Protestants, Pagans and Christians, Realists and Nominalists, Trinitarians and Arians, Conservatives and Radicals, pass, in fact, under review in the pages of history under a host of appellations which all cover one central fact, that of progress and its accompanying reaction. In the age of which we are speaking, the theological movement was a contest between logic and faith, the representative men being Abelard and he who is known as St. Bernard in Church History. Faith in the Church and in authority found its champion in this Bernard, and the logical or questioning spirit of the times was represented by Abelard. In the conflict which ensued between them, let us not make the mistake of supposing that it was a contest between the men merely, it was a conflict of principles, the battle on a theological arena of the Old and the New. Bernard was the more dangerous opponent because he was a man really in earnest; no mere priest, but a deeply-religious soul; one who, while not blind to the moral degeneracy existent within the Church, believed that she possessed the entire truth. He would have joined heart and hand in any effort made in a reverent spirit to cleanse the moral evils away, but the logical inquiring spirit which dared to question, and would not receive with simple faith, the teachings of the Church, called forth the entire force of his indignation. Alas! that such men should be found on the side of error, and should sometimes lend the aid of their earnestness and power to the perpetuation of evil systems.

Abelard had suffered from persecution at the hands of others, but no opponent so formidable had yet attacked him. Bernard felt himself strong in his character for orthodoxy and saintliness, and a degree of arrogance was observable in the course he took of drawing up a statement of Abelard's errors, and submitting them to him with a demand that he would recant them; Abelard indignantly repelled his officious interference. Thereupon Bernard denounced Abelard to the Pope as "a monk without a rule, a superior without care, a man ever varying from himself; internally a Herod, externally a Baptist: ambiguous as a riddle, possessing nothing of a monk but the name and habit; one who proclaims iniquity in the streets; corrupts the integrity of faith, and the purity of the Church; a fabricator of lies and a worshipper of false doctrines; a heretic, not in error only, but in obstinacy and defence of error: when he speaks of the Trinity, an Arius; when of grace, a Pelagius; when of the person of Christ, a Nestorius." It is but just to remember that Abelard did not fight Bernard on equal terms. As the champion of the principle of submission to authority, of course the priesthood would support Bernard, while the earnestness and eloquence of the man, which had gained him the reputation of a saint, would carry the suffrages of the multitude. Abelard, on the contrary, had the Church against him, and in appealing to reason would carry the votes only of the educated and cultivated among the people, of whom we need not say there were but few in those days; and the support even of these was doubtful.

The storm, long gathering, was now thickening; for other events were transpiring calculated to draw attention to the results of Abelard's teaching. Arnold of Brescia, who was one of the scholars of Abelard, had commenced his preaching in Italy, and, expelled thence by the dominant hierarchy, had taken refuge in France. The spirit of freedom which Abelard had restricted to the sphere of the intellect, had been carried further by Arnold, who attacked the hierarchy, not so much on questions of faith, as on the ground that they were despots using the substance of the people, and tyrannising over them for their own aggrandisement and selfish gratification. These events precipitated the attack of Bernard. Abelard felt that his only chance consisted in convincing the reason of men that he was right in his views; he determined to attempt this, and, as might be expected, failed. Condemned as a heretic, he would have suffered the fate of one but for the intercession of Peter the Venerable, the good Abbot of Cluny, and his own timely submission to authority.

While, in the face of his cruel treatment of Heloise, we are compelled to acknowledge the moral depravity of Abelard, we cannot fail to admire his genius. His intellectual greatness is indisputable, and if his moral greatness had been equal thereto, Priestcraft would have found in him a more formidable enemy than, as the case was, he proved to be. His rebellion against authority was that of the intellect, and the great principle he enounced was, "Liberty of examination and discussion in matters of conscience and faith." A noble principle, and though he failed to secure its triumph, it was one which, once announced, would be sure not to die. It is because Abelard was the first to announce it that he stands in the list of the precursors of the Reformation, which, of course, could never have been achieved until the partial triumph of this principle. Had Abelard possessed the moral courage necessary to enable the teacher of a new truth to hold his own against the opponents who ever rise up against such, he might have done more for it than he did. But of moral greatness he was destitute.

But though silenced, Abelard was not crushed, for ere long "he lived again" in the person of his disciple, Peter the Lombard, and through him spoke even from the professorial chair of the University of Paris. Through the centuries the principles he enunciated exercised an ever-increasing power in the Church and in the Schools. Human reason again and again claimed to be heard, and logic opened up bold speculations on even the most sacred subjects, leading to strange beliefs, and sometimes to the utter negation of all belief. Nevertheless, it did a work necessary to be done—a work without which progress was impossible, and in the absence whereof Europe must have retrograded into utter barbarism. But its work was that of the pioneer only, it was a negative principle, it might and did destroy the Old, but could not construct the New.

JAS. L. GOODING.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS).

§ 6.—SENTENTIOUS SAYINGS OF CONFUCIUS.

HAVING already shown that the Chinese Philosopher was in the habit of teaching in a very condensed style, we shall, in this paper, furnish a series of specimens of his sayings, which are selected at random from his works :—

"Happiness arises from contentment of mind,—then cultivate contentment. Without this you can never be esteemed the honourable man."

"In order to govern well an extensive province, you must be diligent in business, faithful to your promises, earnest in practising a discreet economy, and in efforts to love mankind."

"The honourable man who is not dignified in action cannot obtain respect. Neither can his learning remain stable."

"Set the highest value on faithfulness and sincerity. Transgressing you should not fear to return."

"When your sincerity is tempered with gentleness your advice may without danger be repeated; and when your veneration is regulated by reason, shame will be far from you."

"Tell a wise man the past, and he will know what is to come. Do not grieve that men know you not; but grieve rather for that you are ignorant of men."

"Learning without reflection will not profit a man. Reflection without gradual growth in knowledge will leave the mind uneasy and miserable."

"Yavis, let me teach you wherein consists true knowledge. It is in having knowledge that you apply it to good ends, and not having knowledge, to confess your ignorance. This, indeed, is real knowledge." [Another form of the Socratic idea.]

"Without a principle of virtue, a man in poverty cannot long remain virtuous, neither without the principle can he long remain virtuous in prosperity. The virtuous man finds happiness in virtue alone—his knowledge then assists his virtue."

"A man's transgression partakes of the nature of his company. Observe the nature of his transgressions, and through this you will discover if he have virtue or not."

"The learned man, whose desire is toward the right way, but who is ashamed of mean clothing and coarse food, can by no means become my companion."

"Beholding a wise and good man, strive to imitate him exactly; beholding a man void of probity, you should deliberate within yourself;" or, as the commentator adds, "Deliberate within yourself, lest you become equally wicked, therefore set a strong guard and keep constant watch over your actions."

"The upright man will not be left destitute, he will have friends;" and, as the commentator adds, "Possessing virtues, he will be sure to draw around him friends and imitators."

"It is sorrowful I do not see any capable of discerning their own faults and of inwardly regretting them."

"If a man of moderate capacity accustom himself to superior exercises, you can converse with him as with one of superior ability; but if the man of moderate capacity accustom himself to an inferior degree of diligence, you cannot converse with him of superior things."

"Knowledge produces pleasures clear and pure as water; complete virtue produces happiness solid as a mountain; knowledge pervades all things; virtue is tranquil and happy; knowledge is delight; virtue is long life."

"If you are able to practise the more obvious duties, to seek the good of others equally with your own, this may be termed a principal part of complete virtue."

"Pride and extravagance are contrary to the order of society—parsimony may degenerate into sordid misery. If, however, you will go to extremes, then choose parsimony as the least offensive of the two."

"Respect, when not regulated by propriety, soon degenerates, and becomes a painful burden; prudence, when not restrained by our reason, soon degenerates into cowardice; courage, without the guidance of reason, soon becomes insubordination; and frankness, when not controlled by judgment, speedily becomes folly."

"I illustrate and comment upon the old books, but I do not compose new ones. I have faith in the Ancients, I love them; I have the highest honour for our Laopang" [a sage of the Chang dynasty].

"To meditate in silence and to recall to one's memory the objects of one's meditations; to devote oneself to study, and not to be discouraged; to instruct men, and not to suffer oneself to be cast down: how shall I attain to the possession of these virtues?"

"Virtue is not cultivated; study is not pursued manfully; if the principles of justice and equity are professed they are not followed; the wicked and the perverse will not be corrected: that is the cause of my sorrow."

"If we are employed in public functions, then we fulfil our duty; if we are dismissed, we have the repose of a private life."

"To get riches in a fair way, I would certainly engage in a low occupation if it was necessary; if the means were not fair, I would rather apply myself to that which I delight in."

"To feed upon a little rice, to drink water, to have nothing but one's bent arm to lean upon, is a state which has its own satisfaction. To get riches and honour by unfair means seems to me like a cloud driven along by the wind."

"If it were granted to me to add a number of years to my life, I would ask fifty to study the Y-king, that I might render myself free from great faults."

Ye-hong questioned Tseu-leu about Khoung-fou-tsze. Tseu-leu did not answer him. The philosopher said, "Why have not you answered him? Khoung is a man who in his eagerness to acquire knowledge often forgets to take nourishment; who in the joy which he feels at having acquired it, forgets the pains which it has cost him; and who does not disturb himself at the approach of old age. Now you know about him."

"I was not born endowed with knowledge; I am a man who loved the Ancients, and made all exertions to acquire their information."

"If three of us were travelling together, I should necessarily find two instructors; I should choose the good man for imitation, and the bad man for correction."

"Heaven has planted virtue in me, what then can Hoan-teu do to me?"

"Do you fancy, my disciples, that I have any doctrines that I conceal from you? I have none. I have done nothing that I have not communicated to you, O my disciples!"

"I cannot hope to see a holy man; all I can do is to see a wise one." [The exact difference of the two will be explained hereafter.]

"I cannot hope to see a man truly virtuous; all I can do is to hope to see a man constant and settled in his views."

"To want everything, and to act as if one had abundance of possessions; to be empty, and to show oneself full; to be little, and to show oneself great—is a part very difficult to support steadily."

"How is it that there are men who act without knowing what they do? I should not wish to behave myself so."

"We must hear the advice of many people, choose what is good in their counsels, and follow it: see much, and reflect maturely on what one has seen; that is the second step in knowledge."

The inhabitants of Heou-hing were hard to teach; one of their young men had come to visit the disciples of the philosopher. They doubted whether they should receive him among them. The philosopher said, "I have admitted him to come among us, I have not admitted him to go away. Whence comes this opposition on your parts? This man has purified himself, has renewed himself in order to enter my school. Praise him for having gone so far; I am not responsible for his past or future actions."

"Is humanity so far off from us? I wish to possess humanity, and humanity comes to me."

"In literature I am not equal to other men. If I think of a man who unites holiness to the virtue of humanity, how could I dare to compare myself to him? All that I know is, that I force myself to practise these virtues, and to teach them to others, without being disheartened."

Being very sick, Tseu-leu besought him to permit his disciples to address prayers for him to the spirits and the genii. The philosopher said, "Is that the proper thing to do?" Tseu-leu answered respectfully, "It is the proper thing. It is said in the book called *Leni*, Address your prayers to the spirits and the genii above and below." The philosopher said, "The prayer of Khoung-fou-tsze is constant."

"If a man is given to luxury, he is not submissive. If he is too parsimonious, he is vile and abject. However, baseness is better than disobedience."

"Tai-pe might be called sovereignly virtuous. I know not how anything could be added to his virtue; thrice he refused the empire, and the people saw nothing admirable in his conduct."

"We may force the people to *follow* the precepts of justice and reason; we cannot force it to *comprehend* them."

"If a state is governed by the principles of reason, poverty and misery are a cause of shame. If a state is not governed by the principles of reason, riches and honour are the subjects of shame."

P. W. P.

DID THE PARENTS OF JESUS BELIEVE IN THE INCARNATION?

It matters little to explain how the idea of the Incarnation grew up in presence of the fact that it has no historical validity. It is positively untrue in every objective sense; and yet, as all thoughtful men must be aware, it is scarcely possible to do more than indirectly demonstrate its falsity. It happens, however, that they who assert its truth are compelled to admit the impossibility of furnishing the proof; they argue about it as a doctrine to be received in faith, absolute evidence being utterly beyond their reach, and consequently stand upon the same level with those who deny it. Both parties are constrained to appeal to certain points which circumstantially prove or disprove the theory. Both ask assent to propositions as inferences deduced from the comparison and meaning of established facts. But in truth the position of him who repudiates the theory is the strongest, because he who demands that another shall believe in some supernatural occurrence is bound to furnish evidence strong enough to outweigh the testimony borne against it by the unvarying course of nature. We do not say the order of natural action cannot be suspended; but this, that they who declare it has been suspended are bound to furnish evidence of a very powerful and weighty nature. Were a man to protest that he had jumped from Dover to Calais, we should feel justified in denying his statement, merely citing the law of gravitation against him, and the onus of proof would lie at his door. It is thus with the "Miraculous Conception." For being a violation of all experience, we say this, not that it could not be, but that evidence of a very powerful nature should be advanced in order to establish the statement of its having really happened. This, however, is not forthcoming, and hence, according to the ordinary law of evidence, it is enough to say, "Furnish the proof which is to win belief."

It is not, however, intended to rest with that. It must be argued not only that the case for the Incarnation has not been made out, but also, that evidence is to be collected from the New Testament itself which totally disproves the assumption. In the Gospel of Matthew it is stated that Joseph, the reputed father, having discovered his betrothed wife to be likely to become a mother, was angered, and inclined to put her away, but was prevented, he being informed in a dream that he had no just cause of complaint, for "that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."* Luke relates that it was unto Mary the annunciation was made; that the angel Gabriel appeared unto her, and after declaring she was highly favoured among women, said "she should bear a child who should have the throne of David" and should rule over the house of Jacob, also that "The Holy

* Matthew i. 20.

"Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."*

Before considering the value of these texts, it will be instructive to notice the remarks of our Christian writers upon the conduct of Mary under what they are pleased to call "these trying circumstances;" for undoubtedly their absurdity or Jesuitical special pleading almost surpasses belief. For instance, Dr. Kitto felt it necessary to maintain that Mary "doubted not the truth of what she heard." With all the suavity of one of the gentlest divines, he observes, she said not "*Can this thing be*?" but "*How shall this thing be*"?† So that he positively represents her as assenting to the promise, fully confiding in its truth, never daring to hint a doubt, but merely asking how it is to be brought about. But what are the words put into her mouth by Luke? "Then said Mary unto the angel, How can this be, seeing I know not a man?"‡ And that author goes on to relate the argument used by "the angel" in order to prove it would be as he had said. Evidently this is the language of one who doubted, and it was only by omitting the latter clause that Dr. Kitto was enabled to strain her language into that of one who had no doubts. This, however, is the common mode of dealing with such questions. The national teachers see no sin in the ancients refusing their belief, even when "an angel" spake, but they are exceedingly bitter about the disbelief of modern men who have quite other than angelic teachers. Dr. Kitto, however, was not alone in his sophistry, for the great German commentator says, "The faithful, childlike and humble Mary confides herself in the hands of God; she yields willingly to her destiny, in order to accomplish the Divine decrees. The birth of our Lord in the flesh thus became likewise her act of faith; the belief of Mary thus made amends for the unbelief of Eve."§

The two already quoted are the only passages in the entire New Testament which completely divest Joseph of all share in the paternity of Jesus. The writers of the Gospels of Mark and John do not mention this peculiar circumstance, neither is it alluded to by any other authors whose works are called Canonical. There are three sentences of St. Paul's which have been tortured and explained in a non-natural sense, in order to make them bear that interpretation; but curiously enough they are incidental; they require considerable straining to make them yield such an idea, and when thus strained, they are forced into direct opposition to various other passages written by the same Apostle. Thus, so far as the doctrine of the "Divine Incarnation" is concerned, the proof of its truth rests solely upon the dream of Joseph, as reported by Matthew, and the appearance of the angel, as mentioned by Luke. There is no other testimony than that of these two writers, whom we do not know, who composed their works we know not when, and who furnish as evidence, the one a dream, the other a supernatural appearance. Evidently, to say the least, this testimony is suspicious. No such story would be believed in any court of law, or even by the bench of bishops, of a modern event; but being testimony, we must examine its worth; and we submit that the only proof any one need furnish, in order to invalidate the story, is that neither Joseph nor Mary believed it. They are the only persons who can be cited as witnesses. No one else could know anything about it; and, in fact, no one pretends to have any other evidence. Consequently, if Joseph's dream and Mary's idea of having seen an angel are

* Luke i. 35.

† Luke i. 34.

‡ Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations, vol. iv. p. 28.

§ Olshausen on the Gospels, vol. i. p. 197. Olark's Library.

worthy of belief, the evidence furnished by their conduct in their waking moments must be even more valuable as evidence to the truth.

It is a fact that we have abundant evidence to prove they did not believe this story. We shall not look for proof behind the veil which must not now be raised, neither shall we discuss the matter merely in a philological spirit, but fasten upon those broader and more conclusive evidences which speak at once to the soul. For instance, it is related that when Jesus was taken into the temple, as a babe, by his parents, Simeon, an old man, took the infant from them, and holding the infant in his arms, he sang :—

"Now let thy servant depart, O Sovereign
According to thy word, in peace;
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,
Which thou preparedst before the face of all the people;
A light to enlighten the Gentiles,
And a glory for thy people Israel."*

This was only a confirmation of what had previously occurred. The "father" who had been told in a dream that his affianced wife was to become the mother of a superior being, and the mother herself, who had been informed of all this by an angel, beside knowing of the miracle in a manner which none else could know, would only listen to this prophecy as fully confirming their previous ideas, if, indeed, confirmation were needed. Such, at least, is what would naturally be expected. Ordinary human beings would have been thus impressed; but, and here the miracle grows greater, instead of Joseph and Mary gladly hearkening and responding to Simeon, they were astonished at what they heard. Luke reports, "And Joseph and his mother wondered at these things which were spoken of him." Yes, they wondered just as if nothing remarkable had taken place. Had the poorest hind in Judea gone up with his babe to the temple, and had an old man sung a little hymn of prophecy over him, he would have done no more than stupidly wonder, the same as these two did, although the Angel Gabriel had been so communicative.

Again, it is reported that when Jesus was twelve years old, his parents took him up to the Feast of the Passover, held in Jerusalem, and, "when their days were completed," they turned homeward, forming part of a large company, all of whom had been up to the city on a similar errand. They travelled on a day's journey from Jerusalem without seeing their son, but felt no fear, because, as they thought, he was with some of the company. At length, as it is reported by Luke, they missed him, and returned back to the city to discover and bring him with them. It was not, however, until "the third day" that they succeeded in finding him, and then, according to the report, which shall not now be critically examined, they saw him in the temple "sitting in the midst of the learned doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions." We are informed that all who heard him were astonished at his having understanding of the subjects in debate, as also at the wisdom of his answers. But when his parents found him, they also were amazed, and asked him why he had left them; adding that, "sorrowing had they sought him." The whole scene comes out vividly before us, for who is there that cannot picture both the mother and the father, and feel some measure of the gladness felt by them when they saw him safe whom they sought in sorrow?

But what was his answer to their very natural question? He asked, "How was it that ye sought me? Know ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Surely they must now have felt that he was about to

* Luke ii. 28-32; Griesbach.

commence the work for which, as none but they could know, he had been supernaturally born? They could not doubt or misunderstand his meaning. They had been "supernaturally instructed" that he was to do great things for Israel, and could not but comprehend his speech as pointing to the work for which he was sent. And yet, strangely enough, they did not understand it! The Gospel writer says, "And they understood not the saying which he spake 'unto them . . . but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.'" They were as much astonished as the strangers were, and as little did they expect to hear him propose subtle questions or give intelligent answers. We are gravely informed that his mother "treasured all his sayings in her heart," but is it not curious that she had not treasured up in her memory the sayings of the angel? Where was her memory of the angel, the conception, the angels at the birth, and all the wonderful prophecies? Does a mother forget the predictions made by the wise in relation to the future glory of her children? Is there a human being on earth who could ever cease to remember promises made in such a wonderful manner? And, if not, who can believe that Mary could have forgotten what the angel had told her? Surely when a supernatural being—no less in dignity than the Angel Gabriel—had so solemnly informed her that through 'the Holy Ghost coming upon her she should conceive, and 'bear a son, who would be called the Son of the Highest, unto whom 'Jehovah would give the throne of David,' she must from that hour have cherished a conviction that the son thus given would be a marvel in creation, and if his birth were attended by all the miracles recorded in the Gospels, she could only have become the more firmly convinced that his life and actions would transcend those of any other human being. There was nothing he could do which would outrun the hopes of a mother thus influenced. And yet, directly he begins to manifest skill in proposing questions and giving answers, this same Mary is represented as being amazed, precisely as she would have been had nothing remarkable occurred in connection with his birth. We feel that her conduct and her amazement are powerful testimonies against the story of his supernatural paternity and birth, for, evidently, had that story been true, Mary would have heard without amazement, and would have treated as a light matter all the questions and answers in the temple.

P. W. F.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE PSALMS OF 'DAVID.'

(Concluded from page 80.)

IN one of the Psalms there is a full assertion of the doctrine, that God will ever be with the good man, and deliver him alike from the evils of sword and pestilence.

"Under His wings shalt thou find protection,
His truth shall be thy shield and thy defence,
Thou shalt not fear from the terror by night;
From the arrow that flieth by day;
From the pestilence that walketh in darkness;
From the destruction that wasteth at noon,
A thousand shall fall by thy side;
And ten thousand at thy right hand;
To thee it shall not approach."*

* Psalm xci.

That in this form the idea of Providence presented itself to the Hebrew mind is quite clear, as also that Christians for many ages said the same; but in our days we recognise laws which underlie both good and evil, and perceive that quite other rewards are for the good than preservation from either the edge of the sword or the fury of the pestilence.

We must not overlook what is called "the sublimity" of portions, and in some instances of whole Psalms, that are scattered through this collection. We gladly recognise, and as heartily rejoice over, all the sublime passages to be found in them as their orthodox admirers, but differ with them upon the point that "the sublimity is a proof of their Divine Inspiration" in the usually accepted sense. Two questions arise here, (1) What is the Sublime? (2) Cannot man attain to its expression without special Divine assistance? These, though large questions, may be briefly answered. What, then, is the Sublime? Man is endowed with various powers and faculties, all of which need nourishment, and all are more or less developed by means of the materials supplied through the senses. There is the sense of Beauty and the sense of the Sublime, each alike in a degree, but the latter, in its ultimate action, ascending above the former. Beauty speaks to the mind, and lulls it into calm repose; it is inactive and voiceless. The lake lying motionless, looking like a placid mirror; the slumbering vallies, with their fields, cottages, lanes, and hedgerows; beautiful faces and graceful forms all speak to the mind through the senses, and produce pleasurable emotions, but never exalt us, and never rouse the soul to action, deeds of self-sacrifice, and generous actions. It is a pleasing dream, a bright vision, a source of joy, but never a trumpet-call to battle. The sense of true Beauty involves the idea of repose, and exactly as scenes pass from quietude to activity, precisely as they awake to life and action, so do they pass from the Beautiful into the Sublime. The Sublime involves action when connected with things of sense, and the supernatural when connected with the workings of imagination. In the material world, when tempests roar; when the mad winds career in fury across the ocean, or tear up the monarchs of the forest; when the waves rise and throw up their liquid arms, as if in defiance of the skies; when the clouds descend as black palls to cover up both the crested billow and the peaked mountain, and all is shown by the gleam of sudden lightning, we have a scene glorious in its sublimity. But how differently it moves us to the quiet scene of beauty! This speaks through the senses to the soul, to our higher and diviner nature, and makes us conscious of an exaltation which beauty can never bestow. And so, when Milton bears us away to the lake of fire, and shows us the blasted archangel throned upon a sea of flame, he reaches the Sublime, and touches our souls. The "beyond sense" lies at the root of the Sublime, and it moves us precisely in proportion to the amount and culture of the spirituality which exists in our nature.

Thus the sublime is that which we may fitly call "the Beautiful in Action," or the scenes behind the veil of life and nature, the greater workings of the universal soul. The thing of Beauty is an object that satisfies our Taste, but the Sublime satisfies the Intellect, and speaks to the whole being. And can we be so dull as to say that this is never uttered unless when God specially interferes to direct our speech? What, then, are we to believe of Homer and Hesiod, of Pindar and Cleanthes? What of Indian, Persian, and Roman utterances, which are, both in power and pathos, so sublime that the world cannot let them die? In the Psalms there are passages which bear us away out of the world of sense into the world of pure intellect and bodiless souls; passages which exalt us above the seventh heaven, and fill our hearts and minds with a sense of the nature of Life, Death, God, and Immortality—a sense, a joy, which we never lose from out our store of sacred convictions, but preserve them amid our elements of a higher life. And when these were written I doubt not that the writer was borne away upon the wing of holy thought and earnest trust, where sense would not avail, and where neither the eye or the ear would serve as teachers. The spirit, freed from its earthly ligatures, had sped away into the land of soul, and came back enriched with pearls of great price. It journeyed back to its native home, and returned

again to earth, bearing some fragmentary forms of Spiritual Beauty. But not alone the spirits of the Hebrew Psalmists. Man universally has a tendency to the Inconceivable. We all bear it about within us, and oftentimes snatches of eternal song write themselves in our souls, but in a language we only feel the meaning of, and cannot translate into words. To all of us the world has appeared as a great poem, but we lacked the power to write it out. All of us have soared upon the wings of thought and wonder, and have stood in awe before the Eternal Spirit who dwells behind the veil of nature, and we wrong both ourselves and our Maker when we speak as if He had endowed a particular people with a spiritual power which He has denied unto ourselves. The question is not one of nature but of degree, and as men now can read and fully enjoy what others have penned, though incapable of themselves writing it out, so the Hebrew writers in this degree, to some extent, excelled others. They enjoyed a power of expression which finds no superior in any nation, as a nation, although individual men in every nation have exhibited the same power, and have worked to the same end. The Jews had a greater number of writers of Psalms than other nations, and hence the bulk of their collection; but though rich in quality the collection is not sublimer than one we could make up by combining the Psalms of the other ancient nations.

We have many modern Psalmists—men who sing the loves and hopes, fears, aspirations, and successes of our own age, in language as refined and forcible as any employed in the best of these Psalms, for poetry is not dead, neither has the love of the beautiful, or awe of the majestic departed out of men's souls. But doubtless the antiquity of these Bible hymns, when sustained by the subtle beauty that marks so many of their passages, will long continue to win for them an amount of attention and veneration which no modern author, write he ever so nobly, can hope to command. There are passages in them to suit every mood of mind, whether faith or doubt, love or hate, wonder at the marvellous in the universe, or exalted thoughts of man's mission and nature. The youth who has looked out upon the glories of pale night, who gazes with mute wonder upon the march of the stars, and who feels as though behind the blue veil that divides the seen from the unseen, a spirit ever stands to look into the hearts and comprehend the thoughts of men, reads with a deep joy such passages as that of the nineteenth, where the poet says:—

"The heavens proclaim the glory of Jehovah,
The firmament sheweth His handiwork,
Day unto succeeding day uttereth speech,
Night unto night sheweth forth knowledge."

For is there not language in night which we labour in vain to reduce to vocables? We stand and are environed by beauty, calmness, and power; we gaze far into the vast infinitude, and see troop after troop of stars come up in their glory, and the moon, as a fair bride arrayed with grace and loveliness, looking down upon us as if in love and mercy, asking us to exalt our minds, so that we may become inheritors and possessors of the glory that we see. At such moments, when we vainly try to clutch the soul of all, and learn its secret, and are foiled, then, indeed, we ask in sorrow, What is Man? Is he more than a dream? a shadow? a tantalising vapour? But with joy we hear a voice declare that the Eternal has placed him only a little lower than the great spirits which fancy paints as dwellers in the vast infinitude, and has endowed him with powers which fairly raise him out of the animal world with which he is physically bound up. Youth may ponder and read, and both thought and word will aid each other, until freedom, and light, and knowledge come to give power, and peace, and blessedness of communion.

Old age, too, bending beneath the weight of infirmity and care reads in these Psalms until, behold, as by very magic, the pain ceases and care vanishes away. There is a tone of authority running through them which cannot fail to impart deep confidence, although the guidance given may be false. The man who inquires his way from some passer by, and without hesitation is directed in a tone of confidence which path to go, goes on his way without doubt or fear, and it is only

when he has gone far astray that he awakes to a consciousness of the fact of his having been misdirected—and that seeming confidence is not always a proof of knowledge. The Psalms are written in this strain of authority, and hence their power over all minds that have not passed through the training necessary for establishing true mental freedom. And they who have grown old in body, who have borne the burden and heat of the day, and are coming home to the grave, bent and aged, have but to look about for consolation and strength. The mysterious problems of life they have never solved, have never possessed the power required, or the knowledge necessary, to enable them fairly to decide for themselves. That there is a future they neither know nor believe in any true sense, for although they answer Yes, when asked if they believe in Immortality, they have never thought it out for themselves, and are only as human parrots, repeating the ideas of others. In early life they were instructed thus or thus, and that early lesson they now repeat, but without any other reason than its having been taught to them. For such persons the Psalms are invaluable. They read, and, as they read, a glory is thrown over the path by which they are going onward to the grave; even death seems to be transformed into an angel of light; they find passage after passage which tells of the goodness of God, and these are read over and over again until they are printed upon their hearts, and a blessing goes with them. The books of Joshua and Judges, of Samuel and the Kings, are, as by instinct, left unread, for they yield neither consolation to the mind nor any degree of support to hope; the Pentateuch, with Nehemiah and Ezra, are alike passed over for Isaiah and the Psalms, and, considering the facts, we would not mar the reading by insinuation or arguments. But when these persons are cited, when we are told of the calmness and serenity produced in their minds by such reading, as a proof that the passages are superhuman, we are compelled to dissent, and prove the justice of our cause by referring to the fact, that aged readers of the Koran or the Vedas enjoy the same advantages, and, consequently, if these instances prove the Divine nature of the writing, we must argue the same from the results in the other cases, and say they are Divine also.

But in the lands of the Koran and the Vedas are men who have lost the frame of mind under which such convictions and states of confidence are produced by these books. They have outgrown them, and must have a wider and deeper range. Is it not precisely the same with thousand upon thousand in England, in relation to the Psalms? They were once influenced, satisfied, and happy, but are so no longer, because their minds have outgrown the whole framework and modes of thought exhibited in these writings. The sciences, and history, and criticism of modern times, have uprooted all their earlier impressions, so that now they stand Psalmless and waiting for the Singer of our Age, who shall embody, in words, what is the deep conviction of the times. There are many who look at these and tell them such a Singer cannot arise, because the age lacks the elements of song; that we are dwarfed and stunted pines, choked up with an undergrowth of vices which renders actions of the highest character impossible, and hence that the heroic song, the hymn of purity and praise, cannot be conceived. There is not a grain of truth in the assertion, which indeed cannot be made by any save the ignorant or prejudiced. Look only into our courts and alleys, and then, indeed, gloomy thoughts will arise, but to judge of a city, we must do more than examine one of its courts, and to judge an age we must do more than examine one of its vices through a microscope. The Hebrew people gained victories, and hence sung Psalms; but never a victory gained in all their history can parallel the victories of printing and steam power. Long had ignorance closed with its leaden pressure the eyelids of mankind, keeping the souls of men confined within a darkened flesh-tabernacle into which the light could not penetrate. Through that condition of darkness there was continued strife, anger, and bloodshed. Man in his ignorance views his brother man as a born enemy, whom he is bound to subdue; but man in his day of knowledge views his brother with other eyes, and sees in him a co-mate and helper, who alone can aid in the destruction of those evils which have grown into established powers during the long night of ignorance. And when

printing was born into the world it was as though an angel had come with light and healing on his wings; one who will go on growing and waxing stronger until all men, brought within the blessed influence of the truth, will stand up for brotherhood and peace as the natural order of things, and the sources of untold blessings to mankind. This birth was a victory.

And so, too, the power of steam. The problem we have to solve, as citizens, is how we can produce all that is needed to meet the healthy wants of man with the smallest expenditure of Force and in the least stretch of Time. To economise human force and hours, to the end that we may all enjoy time enough to feed and develop our better and intellectual nature, and realise its highest fruit, this is the spiritual aim of the age, though so little recognised. And when steam, as a power, was born and developed, when from out our mines, furnaces, and forges the engine sprang into life, a victory in this direction was gained, greater than all the victories of the past combined. That the real meaning of the victory is not yet fairly comprehended, that as a power it is too frequently employed for ignoble purposes, is nothing more than a proof that still more is required to make it work fully to its end. And, moreover, we know that all great changes are little understood in their natal hour. The early printers never conceived the mighty force they had called into being, nor dreamt of how, when ages had rolled away, their pet machine would minister to the intellectual growth of the poorest peasant in Europe. They saw not the revolutions in Church and State of which their discovery was at once the herald and creator; or in terror they had destroyed their first types, and sent their earliest press back to its original darkness. And the Kings and Priests who nursed it into vigorous growth, as though it were but the Heaven-given agent of Despotism over Body and Soul, little dreamt of how, like an enemy, it would turn again and rend them. Thus, too, the people rose against it as an enemy, knowing neither its mission nor power. And with steam the same, for they whom it came to bless were the first to rise against it. But the clouds are clearing, truth is daily dawning more clearly, and the nature of these victories is better perceived. Shall they not be sung? Shall no Psalms, sacred to the hearts of the millions, in favour of their two great friends, rise up to heaven's gates in token of gratitude? The Ammonites, the Hivites, the Hittites, or the Jebusites slain, shall these have their celebration and not those of our own day? Shall we ever go on singing no new song of deliverance, but only the old Psalms about deliverance wrought and victories gained, to which those of our own day are as the Andes to the molehill? Not so, for these also shall be sung, and in strains alike worthy their greatness, and the mighty deliverances they are to work for humanity.

Yes, shall be sung, and to some extent are sung even now, with many other high and noble enterprises. Look into the Lyrics of Charles Mackay, and say if there are not passages and snatches of song, which, as Psalms, true to what is noblest in the soul of an age, are equal to the finest ever written. David's collection of poems contain beautiful passages, but there are touches of tenderness in Eliza Cook, Mrs. Hemans, Ebenezer Elliot, and a score of others, such as no poet of Israel could ever reach. In Percy's collection of Ancient Ballads there are poems, rough and rugged it may be, but as noble as the finest national lyric in the Hebrew collection, and the day is not far off when in our churches and chapels, instead of singing merely those old Psalms, as if nobody had anything to be thankful for but the Hebrews, we shall sing in our churches songs of Hampden and Cromwell, of Milton and Shakspeare, of Waterloo and Inkermann, of vaccination and steam, in short, we shall sing our own victories in the words of modern men, instead of singing thanks for what we are not thankful, and praising heaven for what we do not understand.

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APOCRYPHAL NARRATIVES OF "JESUS IN EGYPT."

IN the Apocryphal Gospels there are many curious narratives relating to the sayings and works of Jesus; some are ridiculous, others are passable, but all were profoundly believed by our ancestors. The authors begin at the earliest point, with stating that while yet in the womb, Jesus 'healed the 'withered hand of an unbelieving nurse,' and said unto his mother, 'I am 'Jesus, the Son of God, the Logos, whom the Father has sent to save the 'world.' They who maintain the authenticity of the Canonical Gospels are 'disgusted with these falsehoods,' which it seems are too irrational to be believed. But when we go into the world of unreality, one thing is as easily believed as another. In our dreams we are never startled by incongruities, and if in our waking moments we accept one miracle, there is no legitimate reason why we should not accept others. If our common sense is to decide in one case, it is difficult to comprehend why its power should not be duly exercised in all. The believer who allows his reason to guide him when dealing with the Apocryphal Gospels, and then repudiates its authority when dealing with the Canonical, is inconsistent, and deserves to be sent to school again to learn the first principles of reasoning.

The events that happened when the 'holy family fled into Egypt,' are narrated at full length, showing how easy it is to imagine the incidents, supposing the journey itself to have been previously imagined. No such flight occurred, yet here are the circumstances connected with it. Joseph moved 'away from Bethlehem in great haste,' but on the road the girths of the saddle gave way. As the time drew on, the travellers came near a great city, in which was an idol, to which the other idols and 'gods' of Egypt brought offerings and made vows. The writer goes on to relate: 'And there 'was by this idol a priest ministering to it, who, as often as Satan spoke out 'of that idol, related the things he said to the inhabitants of Egypt, and 'those countries. This priest had a son three years old, who was possessed 'with a great multitude of devils, who uttered many strange things and when the 'devils seized him, walked about naked with his clothes torn, throwing stones 'at those whom he saw. Near to that idol was the inn of the city, into 'which when Joseph and Mary were come, and had turned into that inn, all 'the inhabitants of the city were astonished. And all the magistrates and

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'priests of the idols assembled before that idol, and made inquiry there, saying, What means all this consternation and dread, which has fallen upon all our country? The idol answered them, The unknown God is come hither, who is truly God; nor is there any one besides him, who is worthy of divine worship; for he is truly the Son of God. At the fame of him this country trembled, and at his coming it is under the present commotion and consternation, and we ourselves are affrighted by the greatness of his power. And at the same instant this idol fell down, and at his fall all the inhabitants of Egypt, besides others, ran together.'*

The speech of the idol was accounted for by assuming that 'Satan' dwelt within it; but its fall was delightful to the ancient readers, who took words for things. It seems, however, that this was only the prelude to a greater miracle, for now, again, the 'youth possessed with a great multitude of devils,' comes forward. 'But the son of the priest, when his usual disorder came upon him, going into the inn, found there Joseph and Mary, whom all the rest had left behind and forsook. And when the Lady Mary had washed the swaddling clothes of the Lord Christ, and hanged them out to dry upon a post, the boy possessed with the devil took down one of them and put it upon his head. And presently the devils began to come out of his mouth, and fly away in the shape of crows and serpents. From that time the boy was healed by the power of the Lord Christ, and he began to sing praises, and give thanks to the Lord who had healed him. When his father saw him restored to his former state of health, he said, My son, what has happened to thee, and by what means wert thou cured? The son answered, When the devils seized me, I went into the inn, and there found a very handsome woman with a boy, whose swaddling clothes she had just before washed, and hanged out upon a post. One of these I took, and put it upon my head, and immediately the devils left me, and fled away. At this the father exceedingly rejoiced, and said, My son, perhaps this boy is the son of the living God, who made the heavens and the earth. For as soon as he came amongst us, the idol was broken, and all the gods fell down and were destroyed by a greater power.'†

It appears that Joseph and Mary were much alarmed when they heard the account of the idol falling, and concluded that if they did not take their departure their lives would be endangered. 'They went therefore hence to the secret places of robbers, who robbed travellers as they pass by, of their carriages and their clothes, and carried them away bound. These thieves upon their coming heard a great noise, such as the noise of a king with a great army, and many horse, and the trumpets sounding, at his departure from his own city; at which they were so affrighted, as to leave all their booty behind them, and fly away in haste. Upon this the prisoners arose, and loosed each others bonds, and taking each man his bags, they went away, and saw Joseph and Mary coming towards them, and inquired, Where is that king, the noise of whose approach the robbers heard, and left us, so that we are now come off safe? Joseph answered, He will come after us.‡ But he came not, neither did the robbers appear. The holy family, however, were not always freed from their presence; for when upon another journey they came to a desert country, and were told that it was infested with robbers, to make sure of passing in safety they resolved to go on by night. And as they were going along, behold they saw two robbers asleep in the road, and with them a great number of robbers, who were their confederates,

* Gospel of the Infancy, c. iv.; Jones on the Canon.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid, c. v.

'also asleep. The names of these two were Titus and Dumachus; and Titus said to Dumachus, I beseech thee let those persons go along quietly, that our company may not perceive anything of them; but Dumachus refusing, Titus again said, I will give thee forty groats, and as a pledge take my girdle, which he gave him before he had done speaking, that he might not open his mouth or make a noise. When Mary saw the kindness which this robber did shew them, she said to him, The Lord God will receive thee to His right hand, and grant thee pardon of thy sins. Then the Lord Jesus answered, and said to his mother, When thirty years are expired, O mother, the Jews will crucify me at Jerusalem; and these two thieves shall be with me at the same time upon the cross, Titus on my right hand, and Dumachus on my left, and from that time Titus shall go before me into Paradise; and when she had said, God forbid this should be thy lot, O my son, they went on to a city, in which were several idols; which, as soon as they came near to it, was turned into hills of sand.*

Although these narratives are not now believed in England, we are not justified in supposing that elsewhere they are equally in disrepute, for the fact is, they are believed and better known by quite as many as believe and know the others. There is one which is in good repute on the Continent, from which we learn that, during the flight to Egypt, the holy family rested near a cave, out of which 'many dragons suddenly emerged', whereupon Jesus descended from the lap of his mother, and placed himself before the monsters, when they fled, 'and then turned and worshipped him.' Likewise lions and leopards honoured him, and even acted as his guides. Lions mingled with the oxen and other beasts of burden which they had with them; wolves associated with the sheep, and they were all equally peaceful and harmless. A tall palm tree, whose fruit was beyond reach, 'at the command of the child Jesus, bowed itself down to Mary and allowed her to pluck its fruit'; and at a second command it restored itself to its original position. From the roots of this palm Jesus caused to flow a spring of the freshest and purest water. A branch of the same palm, at his command, was carried into Paradise by the angels, there to be a sign of victory to the soldiers of the Christian warfare. When the wanderers were oppressed by heat, Jesus by his word enabled them 'in one day to perform a journey of thirty days.' It is also related here that when Jesus entered a temple, the idols all tumbled down.†

Connected with the imaginative Egyptian journey, the following miracles are recorded. The holy family 'arrived at a town, where a marriage was then about to be solemnized; but by the arts of Satan and the practices of some sorcerers, the bride was become so dumb, that she could not so much as open her mouth. But when this dumb bride saw Mary entering into the town, and carrying the Lord Christ in her arms, she stretched out her hands to the Lord Christ, and took him in her arms, and closely hugging him, very often kissed him, continually moving him and pressing him to her body. Straightway the string of her tongue was loosed, and her ears were opened, and she began to sing praises unto God, who had restored her. So there was great joy among the inhabitants of the town that night, who thought that God and his angels were come down among them. In this place they abode three days, meeting with the greatest respect and most splendid entertainment.' In another city they beheld 'cursed Satan' leap upon a woman, in the form of a serpent. 'This woman seeing Mary, and the Lord

* Gospel of the Infancy, c. viii.

† History of the Nativity of Mary and Infancy of the Saviour.

' Christ the infant in her bosom, asked that she would give her the to child kiss, and carry in her arms. When she had consented, and as soon as the woman had moved the child, Satan left her, and fled away, nor did the woman ever afterwards see him. Hereupon all the neighbours praised the Supreme God, and the woman rewarded them with ample beneficence. On the morrow the same woman brought perfumed water to wash the Lord Jesus; and when she had washed him, she preserved the water. And there was a girl there, whose body was white with a leprosy, who being sprinkled with this water, and washed, was instantly cleansed from her leprosy.*

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—VII.

THE CONTEST OF REASON AND AUTHORITY.

TRUTH is the vital germ which survives the wreck of all systems of thought. Even as the little flower germinates and fructifies in the midst of corruption, so Truth grows up in the midst of error; slow though the process be, the end is certain. It can never die, but must triumph over every form of falsehood, and flourish in the place thereof. History, as a whole, is one grand testimony to the omnipotence of Truth. Over every obstacle which the passion, pride, and prejudice of men have placed in its path, it has eventually triumphed; sometimes hidden for a time, but never dead; often working silently and in secret, but never inactive. The recognition of this explains the course of history, and how, in spite of Priestcraft and superstition, Kingcraft and oppression, humanity has ever advanced; and, in the omnipotence of Truth, we have at once the guarantee and explanation of human progression. Scholasticism, in common with all the systems of the past, affords an illustration of this principle; it contained a vital germ of Truth, which was to live after itself was destroyed, and which made it valuable as an agent of progress. We have now very briefly to look at some of the results which arose out of it.

The time and the person which mark the culminating point of Scholasticism are the thirteenth century, and Saint Thomas Aquinas. It was in the thirteenth century that Europe first became acquainted with the whole of the writings of Aristotle. Hitherto his logic alone had existed in a Latin translation, but now his entire works, metaphysical, physical, moral, and political, were translated. For this Europe was again indebted to the Arabs, and partly also to the Jews, who were admitted more easily than Christians into the Arab Schools in Spain, where the whole of Aristotle, with Arabic commentaries, formed the text books. These were first translated into Hebrew and afterwards reproduced in Latin. Thus was a new epoch in Scholasticism formed, and a complete system of philosophy rendered possible for the Schoolmen. It was the lifework of Aquinas to weld together the philosophy of Aristotle and the theology of the Church. He was the master mind of his age, and in many things far in advance of his time. Europe was indebted to him for the translation of the works of several of the Arabic philosophers; and it is to be remembered to his credit that he defended the Jews against the superstitious prejudices of the age. Of course he had no idea of the civil equality which we claim for them, but he contended for a humane treatment of them no less as a matter of morality than of policy.

But the great work of his life was the attempt to construct a complete

* Gospel of the Infancy, c. vi.

theological philosophy. Cousin calls his *Summa Theologiæ* (the work in which the complete system is developed) "one of the greatest monuments of the human mind in the middle age, comprehending, with profound metaphysics, an entire system of morals, and even of politics, and that kind of politics, too, which is not at all servile." * He had set himself an Herculean task, that of reconciling the irreconcilable, of dovetailing the partially true with the wholly false, of making human liberty and priestly despotism coincide. That he succeeded to the satisfaction of his age in so impossible a labour is no small wonder, and perhaps entitled him to the honorary distinction of Doctor Angelicus—the Angelic Doctor, or Angel of the Schools—conferred upon him by admiring disciples. The grateful Church canonised him after his death; and the Dominicans (to which order he belonged) decreed "That the brethren should faithfully follow the doctrine of St. Thomas, and that if any departed from it, it should be held to be reason sufficient to expel him from his functions."

But was the work successful? The entire system was a compromise, a balance of opposite principles, and though Albertus Magnus, in his admiration, declared it would last till the end of time, its results were such as to pave the way for that great Reformation which was to destroy it and many other things. Its first result was the establishment of the curious doctrine in the Schools that there is a double truth, one philosophical and another theological, and that a proposition may be true in philosophy which is false in theology, and *vice versâ*. This was to open a wide door for the admission philosophically of almost anything, and what it did admit is seen by looking into the University of Paris a hundred years after the time of Aquinas. In the year 1376, the philosophical students in Paris propounded a list of theses, by which they denied the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Resurrection, and asserted the eternity of the world, the influence of the stars on human affairs, and other equally startling propositions. The same theses contained two hundred and nineteen articles, wherein doctrines, at variance not alone with the teaching of the Church, but with all morality, were asserted. The mention of a few of them will show to what lengths the young Europe of those days was prepared to go. Take the following as a sample :—"The will of man is necessarily determined by his knowledge, as is the appetite of the brute.—There cannot possibly be such a thing as sin in the higher powers of the soul; man sins from the influence of his passions, not of his will.—Salvation belongs to the present life and to no other.—There are no other kinds of virtue but the acquired and the innate.—There are fables and falsehoods in the Gospels as in other books.—It is useless to pray, because whatever occurs happens necessarily and cannot be changed." † We do not marvel to learn that these theses incurred the animadversion of the Archbishop of Paris.

Our readers will not fail to perceive what a profound disbelief in all that the Church taught, lies under the fact that philosophy should be made a cloak to cover such principles, while the startling truth of some of them (so far beyond the age) is no less wonderful than the absurdity, immorality, and utter falsity of others. The spirit of these propositions shows that a rationalistic spirit had entered into the Schools. It had, indeed, proceeded to such lengths, that the more timid among theologians were alarmed; while those in whom faith was strong were scandalised that the logic of the Schools

* Hist. Mod. Phil. ii. p. 20. Clarke's Edit.

† Ullmann. Reformers before Reformation, i. p. 37. Clarke's Theol. Library.

should dare to rush into the Holy of Holies, and profane the Sanctuary with its bold doubts and rude questionings. It was the scholastic mind alone which could draw a line between theological and philosophic truth; or, with Thomas Aquinas, so balance the conclusions of logic and the dogmas of faith as that they should seem to be, if not identical, at least consistent with each other. We observe, therefore, as the natural consequence of this, growing up within the Church, side by side with the rationalism of the schools a spirit of mysticism which abjured logic altogether. It is, however, worthy of remark, in passing, that this mysticism, opposed as it was to the scholastic philosophy, was no less opposed to the hierarchical spirit of the Church, and in its later developments became opposed also to the theology of the Church. We shall see hereafter, in looking at the history of mysticism in Germany, that it became one of the direct agencies of the Reformation.

Mysticism may be called the religion of the heart, Scholasticism being that of the head—the one looked to Reason as its guide, the other to the emotional nature of man. It suggests no small measure of depravity on the part of the “Church of the Dark Ages,” that both the heart and the head, the Reason and the emotional nature, of the better part of its members revolted from it. In fact, long before there was any thought of a Reformation such as afterwards came, we find in the writings both of Schoolmen and of Mystics teachings and doctrines utterly opposed in spirit to that which the Church taught as Christianity. Protestantism existed within the bosom of the Church long before a Luther came to give it a voice to be heard through the length and breadth of Christendom; and this spirit took upon itself the form of rationalism or mysticism according as the protest proceeded from the head or the heart. In tracing out the sources of the Reformation, it must never be forgotten that they are found no less in the doubt existing within the Church, than in the opposition from without. The latter was the first, however, of which the Church took cognisance, and it will, therefore, be with this that we shall be occupied in the immediately succeeding papers.

The war between the rationalism of the schools, and the mysticism which found no spiritual sustenance in the orthodox theology, on the one hand, and that theology itself, on the other, has never been sufficiently insisted on either as a reformatory agency, or as forming a tragical ingredient in the spiritual history of the centuries preceding the time of the Reformation. The only historian who notices the growth of the spirit of doubt which arose out of this, among the orthodox sons of the Church, is Michelet; and he very properly calls attention to the fact that it is to be looked upon as a tragic element in the history of those centuries. No other historian has entered so thoroughly into the spirit of those times, and we quote his words with pleasure, not less for their eloquence than for their truth:—“The thirteenth century has its Passion,” (so he writes) “a Passion of acute, profound, penetrating character, hardly dreamed of by previous ages. I allude to the first agony with which nascent doubt convulsed souls; when the whole harmony of the middle ages was troubled; when the great edifice in which men were settled began to shake; when saints clamoured against saints, right setting itself up against right—the most docile minds found themselves compelled to sit in self-judgment and examination. . . . But the bitterness of this first falling off in faith was, that men shrank from avowing it. At this day we are inured to the torments of doubt; the points are blunted. But let us carry ourselves back to the first moment in which the soul still living, and warm with faith and love, felt the cold iron

"enter. The pain was harrowing, but it was exceeded by the horror and "surprise."* Yes! in truth, if we consider it well, there is much that is tragic in the ages of doubt and growing distrust which close up the history of the "Church of the Dark Ages." They who remember how in simple boyhood's time they listened, with a deep feeling of love and reverence, to the church bells as they ushered in the "Day of Rest"; how the solemn tones of the grey-headed minister, as he read the words then believed to be the very words of God, created a deep awe within the soul; and how the old church itself was a sacred place to them—they know full well that those years in which one by one the illusions of the early time gave way before growing doubts of their reality and truth, were not happy years. The history of the world, like that of individuals, is full of such tragedies; let Priestcraft bear the blame!

JAS. L. GOODING.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS).

§ 7.—INCIDENTS IN HIS CAREER.

CONFUCIUS had many enemies, and exactly in proportion to the increasing fidelity and devotion of his disciples was the hatred of those who were disgraced by his uprightness. He had abandoned the office he held because, as before stated, they who were the personal advisers of the monarch were corrupt and unjust men. But, as in the case of Sir Thomas More, there was all the greater desire to gain, if not his hearty, then at least his seeming approval of the existing condition of things. The usurping minister, Yang-hoo, was galled by the course the philosopher was pursuing, and devised a subtle scheme for entrapping him and subjecting him to punishment. He prepared a sumptuous sacrifice in honour of ancestors; and it being the custom to distribute the offerings, after the ceremony, amongst the most devoted and most favoured grandees, who could not refuse a gift which was esteemed sacred, Confucius was included in the list. The philosopher, desirous of holding no intercourse with the man, yet equally scrupulous in what concerned ceremonies and the rules of good manners, was a little embarrassed. If he declined the present, he offered an affront to the sender, and violated the ritual; if he accepted it, he not only allowed himself to be considered one of the usurper's partizans, but would be constrained to pay him a visit of thanks, which he was most anxious to avoid. He at length decided to accept the present, and, with a species of artifice, somewhat at variance with his customary candour, to pay his visit of thanks when he knew the minister was from home. Accident, however, defeated the latter scheme; he met Yang-hoo without the city, and the latter, addressing the philosopher, graciously invited him to his house, observing, in an insinuating tone, that, if his own occupations permitted, he would be the most zealous of his disciples. "Ought a man like you," he continued, "who is "in possession of the most invaluable treasure, namely, wisdom, to bury it?" Confucius modestly replied, "The man who indeed possesses such a treasure "does wrong to bury it; he ought to let all partake of it who can." "And "he who holds the torch of science," continued Yang-hoo, "should he "suffer it to expire in his hands? Ought he not to employ it in illuminating

* Hist. France, B. iv. c. 9.

"those who are in the gloom of ignorance?" "An enlightened man," Confucius gravely answered, "should try to enlighten others." "Nay," then," resumed the minister, "you are self-condemned. You are stored with wisdom, and able to instruct these who direct the helm of government, yet you deny them your aid. Is this the conduct of a man who has the good of the people at heart?" "Every one who loves the public weal," rejoined Confucius, "ought to show it by his conduct." By these and other ambiguous answers, the philosopher, with calm dignity and perfect courtesy, parried the crafty questions of a bad man, who, he knew, was studying his ruin.* Still it had been far more pleasing to the European reader to find that he had been a little plainer spoken. Jesus parried the questions of the Pharisees, and is praised for his skill in doing so, but we confess it would have satisfied us better had he answered without evasion, as his heart prompted him.

In the year 507, B.C., in order to learn the number of his followers, and to render them the assistance they needed, the philosopher resolved to pay a visit to some neighbouring states. Among others, he visited Tse, the king of which created him one of his ministers, and immediately he set to work to effect reforms, which struck terror to the heart of the "Chief of the Cabinet." As it is now so it was in the beginning with those who are trained to fill such offices. They must do all according to their rules, and he who allows common sense to be his guide is esteemed a most dangerous man. The minister poured his sorrows into the ears of the king, and we who read his speech can fancy it to be spoken by a well-known modern statesman. "This foreigner," said he, "is introducing innovations which will infallibly overturn your throne. He wishes to make mankind different from what they are and must be. He is an impracticable theorist, and your subjects, habituated to customs which he is about to alter, will be incited to insurrection. Your case will be invaded by the toils he will impose upon you, as well as by the murmurs of your people; and you will find, too late, that the votaries of wisdom and virtue do not always regulate their own conduct by the rules they profess. Let this philosopher, if he will, give instructions to those who voluntarily seek information respecting history, music, rites, and the classics; but do not countenance his dangerous changes, and arm him with power to enforce them, by appointing him your minister." The argument was successful, and the reforming minister was "dismissed with thanks," but so coldly given that they sounded more like rebuke.

He returned home and again busied himself with his disciples. The following anecdote will illustrate how he occasionally taught them. Amongst the few ancient ceremonies still observed, was that of offering sacrifices on mountains. With this intention, he ascended Nung-shan, attended by three disciples, Tsze-loo, Tsze-kung, and Yan-hwuy. After he finished the ceremony, he cast his eyes around from the summit of the hill, sighed deeply, and descended in silence, and with an aspect of grief. His companions inquired the reason of this sorrow; Confucius replied, that he could not forbear thinking of the condition of the surrounding nations, and deploring their disordered state and mutual animosities. "This it is," he added, "which has afflicted me. Can either of you conceive a remedy for the present, and how to prevent future ills?" Tsze-loo, who had received a military education, replied that, in his opinion, the disorders might be cured if a strong army were placed under his command, with which he would attack

* Asiatic Jour. New Series, vol. i, p. 25.

evil-doers without mercy, cut off the heads of the most guilty, and expose them as an example to the rest; after this victory, he would employ his two colleagues in enforcing order, the observance of the laws, and the restoration of ancient usages. "You are a brave man," said Confucius. Tsze-kung said he would proceed in another manner. At the critical moment, when the armies of two kingdoms were about to engage, he would rush between them, clad in a mourning habit, and, in a pathetic appeal to them, set forth the horrors of war, the blessings of peace, the delights of the domestic circle, the obligations due to society, and the woes entailed upon it by ambition, licentiousness, and indulgence of the passions; "touched by this address," said he, "they would drop their arms, and return in harmony to their respective homes, when I would employ Tsze-loo in regulating military, and Yan-hwuy civil concerns; the one would restore order, the other maintain it." "You are an eloquent man," observed the philosopher. Yan-hwuy was silent, nor, until the master had insisted upon hearing his opinion, did he modestly say, that he wished for nothing more than humbly to co-operate with a virtuous and enlightened monarch, in banishing vice and flattery, encouraging sincerity and virtue, instructing the people, and ameliorating their condition. "When all fulfilled their duties," he observed, "there would be no need of warriors to compel, nor rhetoricians to persuade men to virtue; so that the valour of Tsze-loo and the eloquence of Tsze-kung would be equally superfluous." "You are a wise man," said Confucius. "But which is the preferable scheme?" asked the impatient Tsze-loo. "If what has been suggested by Yan-hwuy," replied the philosopher coolly, "could be accomplished, mankind would retrieve and perpetuate their happiness, without loss of blood, expenditure of property, or waste of time in elaborate discourses."

There was a touch of satire in this hardly to be expected from the Sage; but the gist of the advice he approved was noble. Carlyle is constantly harping upon the themes, that "he is the best and most efficient reformer, who applies himself to the task of reforming himself," and that banishing vice and flattery, coupled with encouraging sincerity and virtue, will do more for us as a nation than can ever be done either by monster guns or ships large enough to bridge the Channel. There are plenty who carp at his doctrines, but what man can deny his premises? Bloodshed and eloquence are attractive, and the world has honoured them to the utmost stretch of its power; yet, after all, there are reasons for believing it would be better to fall back upon the principles enunciated by Confucius. If the hour ever come when fustian is not considered disgraceful, and broadcloth is not accepted as proof of virtue, there will be reason for believing that the end of evil draweth nigh.

It was his practice, in this manner, to make his disciples and pupils think for themselves, and discover the truth by their own efforts, rather than lean upon his authority. "I teach you nothing," he often repeated, "but what you might learn yourselves, if you made a proper use of your faculties. What can be more simple and natural than the principles of that moral code, the maxims of which I inculcate? All I tell you, our ancient sages have practised before us, in the remotest times, namely, the observance of the three fundamental laws of relation, between sovereign and subject, father and child, husband and wife; and the five capital virtues; namely, universal charity, impartial justice, conformity to ceremonies and established usages, rectitude of heart and mind, and pure sincerity." P. W. P.

DID THE PARENTS OF JESUS BELIEVE IN THE INCARNATION ?

(Concluded from p. 92.)

IN addition to this, however, it is quite as serious an objection to the idea that the parents of Jesus believed in his Divine nature, that they put him to learn the trade of his father. There is nothing derogatory to the honour of a man in labour, for it is the badge of independence and the sign of manhood. But in judging this matter, we cannot overlook the fact that when the supernatural operates upon man, he is compelled to move out of his ordinary path. It may be possible for us to employ the highest man to perform the lowest offices, but it would be exceedingly difficult. It might be within our power to set Cromwell to cleanse a sewer, Shakspeare to drive a team, and Carlyle to attend a dustcart, if we did not know who and what they are; but knowing one to be the great patriot soldier, the second to be the great dramatist, and the third to be the greatest moral teacher of his age, we should find it exceedingly difficult to employ them in such low offices; not, however, because of feeling that there is anything disgraceful in those forms of labour, but simply because of our consciousness that the men are by nature qualified and intended for much higher work.

We read in old books of history, of King Alfred having been employed by the farmer's wife to attend to the baking of some cakes then on the stove. Instead of doing so he left them to burn, whereat she was very wroth; but when informed who he was, her anger passed away, for then she felt that although there was nothing dishonourable in attending to the cakes, he was unfitted for the task, because of being employed in thinking of higher matters. This is not cited as a positive historical truth, for it is nothing of the kind, but it contains a subjective truth. They who are conscious of the higher qualifications, cannot bring themselves to furnish lower employment. And if this be so in relation to the human, how much more powerfully will it operate in relation to the Divine! Imagine even that the spirit of one we knew in our childhood could come back to earth to inhabit a human frame, and we were acquainted with the fact, is it possible we could employ that ghostly personage to paint our houses or print our books? Is it not certain that our awe of the supernatural would exert such authority over us as to prevent our setting them such a task? Go, then, a step farther, and imagine the Divine Being incarnate in human form. Say that He who rules the Universe were embodied in a human form, and that we were fully conscious of the fact; say we had obtained our information through the interposition of some superior intelligence—an angel having appeared and taught us this wonderful truth, so that we knew the matter to be as he had said, quite as clearly as Mary must have known of Jesus—and that Divine Being either comes to our door to ask for employment, or in some other way places us in the position of being able to employ Him in some menial office—Could we do so? Let every man answer the question for himself. We have no doubt that, duly considered, everyone would say, No, for the feeling of awe would prevent it. And in like manner it would have operated with the parents of Jesus. Had they believed in the story of the Incarnation as it is now believed, they would have been incapable of employing or treating him as other children were treated. All the miracles recorded in the Gospels fall short of the greatness of that one which was performed when they put Jesus at the bench

to learn how to win his bread by daily labour, if they believed him to be Divine. But probably our readers, meditating upon all the facts, will agree with us, in saying that both Joseph and Mary acted in such a manner as to testify to the world that they believed not in the "Holy Incarnation."

If we turn from the parents to the son himself we find him exhibiting precisely the same sort of ignorance of the theory. It is clear to our minds that Jesus did not believe, and had not heard, the strange story of the Incarnation, for had he done so, he would have made some allusion to it in his discourses or discussions. But he never once alluded to anything of the kind. Many orthodox writers have felt his silence to be an oppressive argument against the common theory; they have been put to their wits' end to discover some plausible excuse, but, as a rule which knows no exception, failure marked all the attempts. The amiable Dr. Pye Smith endeavoured to meet the difficulty in the following manner. He says, "The fact in question was of the most private and delicate nature possible, and, as to human attestation, it rested of necessity solely on the word of Mary herself, the person most deeply interested. Joseph's mind was satisfied with regard to her honour and veracity by a divine vision; which, in whatever way it was evinced to him to be no delusion, was still a private and personal affair. But these were not the kind of facts to which the first teachers of Christianity were in the habit of appealing. The miracles on which they rested their claims, were such as had multiplied witnesses to attest them, and generally enemies not less than friends. Here, then, we see a reason why Jesus and his disciples did not refer to the circumstances so peculiar and necessarily private. At the same time let it not be forgotten that our Lord, in repelling the assaults of his enemies, habitually insisted upon the spotlessness of his character [P]; but if there had been any ambiguity about his origin, it is more than probable that their malignant industry would have brought it forward to his disparagement,* as they did not hesitate to do in the case of a poor man whom they thought they might insult with impunity.† Surely, also, reason and feeling dictate that there is a high propriety, a sort of national congruity, in the idea that He who was to be the Saviour of men from sin should receive his bodily frame in a manner absolutely free from the semblance of any pre-disposition to moral infirmity."‡

Here the fact of silence is admitted, but the excuse is valueless. The delicacy of the subject pertains only to our own age and country. In England there is some difficulty in speaking upon such themes, but no such difficulty was felt in the East; at the time when Jesus lived, it was not considered to be in the least indelicate to allude to subjects which a man dares not to speak of in modern society. Proof of this is furnished in both the Old and New Testaments, for, as all its readers are but too painfully aware, the language is exceedingly plain and indelicate. Obviously, then, the plea in defence of silence is misconceived, and quite as much out of place as it would be to say that Nebuchadnezzar stormed Jerusalem and destroyed its buildings with the aid of a detachment of Armstrong guns.

But even had it been true that the subject called for gentle handling, it is also true that its importance—as an element to demonstrate to the Jews that Jesus was really a Divine Being would not only have justified, but positively demanded that it should be spoken of and proved. There was no

* But if the miraculous conception were not spoken of until after their death, what then? They had nothing to complain of in his being the son of Joseph and Mary.

† John, ix. 34.

‡ Dr. Smith. *Christian Testimony to the Messiah*, vol. i. p. 411, 4th ed.

word that could be uttered which could influence and convince the people more than the furnishing a proof of this would have done. It would have been unanswerably decisive, and had the proof been publicly furnished the world would have been spared from innumerable evils. For the great contest has always been, not about what Jesus said, but what is said of Jesus. Men do not say that he spoke falsely when teaching, but that others have spoken falsely of him. And especially in relation to this miraculous conception, even the orthodox believer must be pained by feeling his incapacity to cite Jesus as a believer.

Unhappily, in modern days, men speak of those times and persons as if they had had the four Gospels for popular reading, the same as we have. But even according to the most orthodox views, those accounts were not written until thirty years after the death of Jesus, and Jesus himself was thirty years old when he began to teach. So that if the events reported by Matthew and Luke had occurred, and even if they had become known to a few, the great bulk of those who knew of them had passed away, and those who remained knew them not. Thirty years work a great change in the personal of a people, and hence there was a positive necessity for Jesus publicly alluding to his miraculous birth, in order that those unto whom he spake should be made acquainted with a fact so momentous. For if it were necessary that the miracle should be wrought, it was equally necessary it should be attested.

But he did not! Nay, not only did Jesus avoid speaking about his birth, not only did he fail to say he was a divinely generated being, but he positively gave his assent to the proposition that Joseph was his father. He who hears a marvellous statement made pertaining to himself and does not contradict, attests its truth; and he also who has been born in a miraculous manner, and hears himself spoken of as an ordinary human being, attests the falsehood if he do not protest against it. When the people, gathered round him, said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" * Jesus did not cut them short by saying "Joseph was not my father." If modern men say he was the son of Joseph and Mary, they are instantly cut short and informed he was miraculously born, and surely that was the very answer Jesus would have given to these men had he been able to do so. Had he believed himself to be a supernatural being, supernaturally born, he was too wise not to know that the proof would have shaken all his opponents, and too generous not to have furnished it.

THE LIFE OF JESUS.

Acting in accordance with the desire of many friends, it has been resolved to keep the List of Subscribers to the above work open until the first of March, 1861. The Subscription, £1. 1s., may be forwarded to our Printer, Mr. W. OSTELL, Hart Street Bloomsbury, or to the Author, Dr. P. W. PERFITT, 20, Hemingford Terrace, Barnsbury. The first of the three volumes is now in the press, and will be delivered in March, and the third volume not later than September.

We have just issued

'THE ORIGIN AND AUTHORITY OF THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES,'

Which may be had from our Publishers, Price One Shilling.

* John vi. 42.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF SOLOMON.

It frequently occurs to the mind as a remarkable fact that many celebrated men of the Past who are renowned for possessing particular virtues; who are held up before us as the types and examples of a marked superiority, have yet no facts or anecdotes recorded in their written lives which at all correspond with their traditional character, so as to justify the honour bestowed upon them. They are famed for their virtue, magnanimity, heroism, patience, piety, or adherence to duty, but we have no illustrative examples, and cannot therefore maintain in argument that they were, in their daily lives, what tradition has represented. As we have already seen, there are no facts recorded in the history to justify us in concluding that Abraham was such a "glorious Father of the Faithful" as he is said to have been. Take all the facts into the light shed by the history, examine them side by side with the manners and religious usages of his age, and at once we perceive not only the impossibility of ranking him so far above, but even of placing him with upright and faithful souls, or of treating him otherwise than as a man who was unfaithful even to his limited perceptions. We ask, not that his moral conduct shall equal the standard of moral greatness as estimated in our own age, for that would be unfair; but we are justified in rejecting him as unfaithful when, as the history reveals, we see him violating the moral principles commonly maintained in his time. Then, when we reflect upon the facts recorded of Isaac and Jacob, we feel their incompatibility with the characters given them by tradition. Good men we cannot call them, and yet they are presented to us as the finest examples. How can we join the general chorus, and proclaim the patience of Job? Was he patient when cursing the hour in which he was born? patient in his discussions? or in his assertions that he suffered through injustice? There is not a preacher in the land who would recognise us as patient were we to employ the same language, and curse our lot as bitterly as Job cursed his. I question not the moral grandeur of the poem, but only the tradition and the practice of our Churches in setting him up as the model of that virtue which he did not possess. And David, too, who is spoken of so highly, who is preached up as one of the greatest of men, have we not recently looked into the facts without succeeding in discovering one reason for believing him to have been a "man after God's own heart"? If it were so, if indeed and in truth he was loved by the Eternal Source of Truth, if he were the paragon of virtue who never erred save upon one point, then undoubtedly that which we find in the Bible, and call the story of David, must be totally untrue. Yet what is true we cannot say, seeing that no other story has reached our age, and hence his real life must remain unknown.

And is it not particularly strange that these Hebrew heroes should need so much attention that all the Churches of the land should be busy developing their histories and theories? They are said to be the greatest, purest, wisest, and most disinterested of men, and yet no reader can discover these characteristics in the story until the modern painters have been called in to paint a commentary, which is to serve as a guide for the uninitiated. Is it possible to conceive the amount of writing, the body of printing, or the long hours of expository preaching, constantly undertaken in order to prove, or, at least, to satisfy men, that Abraham was faithful, that Jacob was honest, that David was pious, and that Solomon was wise? And yet, although so much has been done in this direction, the world seems to be no nearer the belief, and obviously the work must be gone all over again. Yes, again and again, until the bubble bursts, and the masses dare to see for themselves. But is it not a most remarkable fact, that those who are the real world-heroes have no priesthood to defend them, no clergy weekly to preach in order to maintain their reputation, and yet they live in honour? It is true, after all, that corks cannot keep a lie for ever floating, and that the truth needs them not. Let the story of Joan of Arc be told to the world, and I undertake to

say there will be but one conviction as to her purity and worth. All who hear the whole will conclude at once that her patriotism was of the highest, and that her memory can never be allowed to perish from the annals of our race. And who would dream of attempting to prove that George Washington loved America, and was as simple as earnest in his aim to achieve her freedom? Tell the story simply from beginning to end, and every listener will see at a glance the impossibility of questioning either the patriotism or virtue of this American hero. Who would dream of arguing that John Howard was a philanthropist? of entering into debate with a man who declared that Napoleon was a coward? or of defending the position that Shelley was a poet? We need only give the actions of Howard, the battle scenes in which Napoleon played so distinguished a part, and the writings of Shelley, without adding any commentary, for these bear all a light within themselves which reveals their true nature. Argumentative proof is as valueless as it is unnecessary in these cases, and such reputations stand by their own inherent vitality. And so with the mighty names of Greece and Rome, which have no priesthood to preach in their defence, or to maintain their honour. They stand free, and ask no apologists. But when we come to these "greatest and purest men," then it is defenders are required—not to prove that good men should be loved, but to prove that these men were good. It is an unending labour; for, alas! it is ever beginning anew, and perhaps it will be best for men to abandon altogether a task which is too hard of performance.

Think of the wisdom of Solomon and the wisdom of Socrates! The one has had millions upon millions of paid advocates; millions upon millions of human souls trained into the habit of praise, and into that of persecuting all who dispraised him, while the other has had no well-organised system through which his words and memory were kept alive; and yet at the present hour, so far as the educated are concerned, there is a wider and deeper veneration of Socrates than of Solomon, and a more profound conviction of his wisdom. One has been preserved from sinking through the efforts of a paid priesthood, but the other has maintained his position upon the tide of Time through his own buoyancy. The wisdom of the Pagan is made manifest to the simplest hearer, but it cannot be so taught of the Hebrew. What his reputation as a wise man rests upon it is now impossible to discover. Generally, as we know, he is called the author of "Ecclesiastes," and were that true we should be prepared to assent, with some limitations, to his being pronounced wise; but he did not write that work, as I will unmistakably prove in my next lecture, and, consequently, all the wisdom attributed to him through that production must be subtracted. Then there is the "Song of Solomon," a writing that has been, I will not say universally misunderstood—for that would be assuming ignorance on the part of men whom we know were not ignorant—but one which has been most grossly misrepresented, as will be seen in an after lecture. Was this the writing of Solomon? Certainly not; and even if it were, it would be hard to infer the highest wisdom as the possession of the writer. But what of the Proverbs, and the wise philosophy, the concentrated experience, which lie beneath proverbial sayings? I shall not discuss just now either the abstract truth of proverbs, or their practical value, but I estimate them both very low indeed, and would rather not be compelled to seek wisdom under such disguises. Still, however, without discussing their abstract value, we have to answer the question, Did Solomon write them? and either we shall believe the Church, which says he did write them, or the Bible, which says he did not. But, taking this as doubtful, where, then, are we to look for that high degree of wisdom which made him the wonder and glory of his age? It is hard to say where, but this evening we will look carefully into the records of his life, and endeavour to eliminate the meaning and value of the facts, and this done we shall be prepared to judge fairly of the wisdom he exhibited as a man, as a citizen, as a king, and perhaps, too, as a statesman.

Indeed, if we judge Solomon as men who approve the policy of Machiavel, we shall declare his statesmanship profound, for at the commencement of his reign he adopted the policy of slaying his opponents and rivals. As you remem-

ber, he was the son of Bathsheba, the widow of the murdered Uriah, and 'God had given him as a comfort' to the sinner king. Of his youth we know nothing; we only hear of him as advanced in years, and as the future king. He was not the elder-born, but the favourite-born, and hence his elevation. David had established his throne, and with it the right of bestowal. In the history we read that God gave the throne to Solomon, and instructed David to that effect. I will not say that the people were not thus taught, yet, before we say it was really so, we must determine the value of David's word. Did he declare the truth? It rests upon his testimony, and we may be pardoned for declining to accept the word of David as the word of God. Still, although the king had designated Solomon to the throne, there was a party in Israel who desired that Adonijah should reign, and they took steps to bring about that end. There is a narrative in the First Book of Kings in which the history of the transaction is clearly given:—"Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also was a very goodly man; and his mother bare him after Absalom. And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest: and they following Adonijah helped him. But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged to David, were not with Adonijah. And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by En-rogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants."

Adonijah desired to be king, but he lacked policy. He called some of the mighty men, but not the mightiest. He called the soldiers, but not the priests, and that was fatal to his arms. Nathan the prophet looked with an evil eye upon these doings, and, being a man of deep policy, he "spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our Lord knoweth it not? Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon. Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?' why then doth Adonijah reign? Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words." In modern times we should call this scheming to shift a crown.—What was it when Nathan did it? But of course the mother obeyed, and the whole scene is worth recording:—"And Bathsheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the king was very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king. And Bath-sheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said, What wouldest thou? And she said unto him, My lord, thou swarest by the Lord thy God unto thine handmaid, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne.' And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest it not: and he hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called. And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. Otherwise it shall come to pass when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted as offenders."

"And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in. And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground. And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God save king Adonijah. But me, even

"me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called. Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not shewed it unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

"Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. And the king sware, and said, As the lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, even as I sware unto thee by the Lord God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day. Then Bath-sheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever.

"And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king. The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon: And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon. Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah. And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, Amen: the Lord God of my lord the king say so too. As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David. . . . And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon. And all the people came up after him, and the people piped their pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

"And Adonijah and all the guests that were with him heard it as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore is this noise of the city being in an uproar? And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou art a valiant man, and bringest good tidings. And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king. And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule: and Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. This is the noise that ye have heard. And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom. And moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord king David, saying, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king bowed himself upon the bed. And also thus said the king, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which hath given one to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it. And all the guests that were with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way.

"And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar. And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon; for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me to day that he will not slay his servant with the sword. And Solomon said, If he will shew himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die. So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house."

(To be continued.)

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BUTLER AND THE APOLOGISTS.

ACCORDING to the clerical theory, the greatest work yet written in defence of the orthodox religion is that known as "Butler's Analogy." Churchmen are very proud of it, and usually, when anxious inquirers ask their pastors to solve some religious problem which has caused them to feel very uneasy, they advise a reading of that work, which they seem to look upon as a sort of panacea for all sceptical affections. It happens, however, that in the majority of instances wherein the advice is given, it is evident either that they have not comprehended the question proposed, or that they have not read the book, for it contains no answer to any of the more important objections which occur to the mind of the modern inquirer. It is called a great bulwark of revealed religion, but every thoughtful man who has read it as it deserves to be read, knows it is nothing of the kind. Its author designed to show that as much may be said against "Natural" as against "Revealed Religion." He starts with the statement that, as there are difficulties in the way of our comprehending nature, so the same difficulties may be expected in relation to revelation, and the whole work is devoted to the proof of that proposition. There is no attempt made, or even proposed, in order to prove the truth of those works which are said to have come into existence through God inspiring human beings to compose them; neither is any attempt made to lessen the various difficulties which meet the inquirer who is diligently engaged comparing the various books, chapters, and doctrines. All the skill and power of the author is devoted to the task of showing that such difficulties were to be looked for. Over and over again it is set forth of difficulties, that, as we meet with them in nature, therefore they are to be looked for in revelation. His argument is based upon analogy, but the same analogy is fatal to all revelation theories. For instance, it is of the utmost consequence to man that he should become correctly informed respecting the nature and effects of various bodies found in the heart and upon the surface of the earth. To mistake the nature of arsenic is fatal; to take foxglove and belladonna in mistake for simple herbs is fatal to the body, and, according to the theory of the Churches, fatal to the soul also. They say that the body must be preserved for a time, in order that the soul may be saved. Does it not follow, then, that men should have had revelations made unto them respecting the nature of various agents which

would poison? All agree that we have not. All seem to be satisfied that God will not give anything of the kind, and by analogy it may be argued, therefore, He will not furnish revelations of any other character.

Probably, it is to the poverty of the clerical mind we are to attribute the praise bestowed upon a treatise of this character, for a little reflection would have served to show any one that the existence of one difficulty in nature furnishes no proof that a second in "revelation" came from Heaven, as it would satisfy all that, when God condescends to reveal His will to mankind, He will do so quite as plainly as it could be done by a human being, so that doubt as to His meaning will be impossible. The idea of a revelation is that God has undertaken to explain to man certain things which man could not discover for himself, and we submit that, in such a case, it is not to be expected there will be any difficulty in understanding what is meant. The author had evidently forgotten that a revelation is a laying bare the truth, and, consequently, that it is not reasonable to expect any difficulty in comprehending the meaning, such as we encounter when we plunge into the heart of the earth to read its history, or move amid the stars to discover the laws by which they are sustained in motion.

At some future period we shall endeavour to reply to that work, when, as a light task, we shall lay bare its many fallacies. At present, it is merely noticed because, although imperfectly, it suggests the truth that we must encounter difficulties in all our inquiries as we now exist, dependant as we are upon human teachers, none of whom are capable of conveying their full meaning in any known form of words, we must expect in all great works to find many passages which will require close thought, in order that we may reach the meaning of the writer. Nothing, indeed, is more difficult than to convey in simple words a series of abstract ideas. The works of such men as Sir Thomas Brown, Immanuel Kant, and Schelling, require, for their due appreciation, that the reader shall pause frequently in his course, in order to make sure that he has caught the idea the author wished to convey. And not unfrequently it happens, as in solving some of the higher geometrical problems, the work has to be done over again, because at some point in the argument, or the calculation, our attention failed, or our signs were wrongly arranged—there is nothing for it but care, patience, and intense mental application.

But, although admitting this, it is to be argued, in opposition to Butler, that the rule does not apply to the series of facts recorded in the Gospels. There are discourses of Jesus, which will tax all a man's power of thought in order fully to appreciate his meaning, and in relation to such portions of the Gospels great latitude must be conceded; but the same latitude cannot be extended to the other parts in which professed historical narratives are given. There may be a seeming contradiction in the doctrines taught, which, however, will probably turn out to be no contradiction at all when we put forth all our power of thought to comprehend the deeper meanings which lie beneath the passages; but thought can exercise no power strong enough to harmonise the contradictions about the time when the twelve disciples were called, about the ministry of Jesus in Galilee, and numberless discrepancies of a similar character.

The usual practice of biblicists is to shield the latter class of contradictions behind the sound argument that protects the others, but such a course is alike immoral and fatal to the progress of truth. Each division must stand or fall by itself; for, as no historical demonstration of the falsity of many gospel nar-

ratives will serve to destroy the truth, which lies embedded, like a rich vein of ore, in some of the discourses, so that truth cannot be cited to prove the correctness of statements which, in other ways, have been demonstrated to be false. If gold and iron are put into one vessel, they do not change each other's nature, and it is as unreasonable to argue that, because the gold is proven to be gold, therefore the iron with which it is mixed is gold also, as to say that, because there is truth of the highest order in some of the reported discourses, therefore the false narratives are true also.

In all ages, the intelligent students of the New Testament have been rendered painfully conscious of the existence of these contrary elements, and hence have come the various protests against the Christian theory. In the early days of Christianity, the fictitious portions were not permitted to operate very largely for evil, because of the fact that the Christian consciousness was held to be supreme above all that was recorded in books. IGNATIUS advised his hearers to do nothing but in accordance with the Christian consciousness. To him it appeared, as it has done to the Society of Friends, that the power within is supreme over all that is without, and while that remained as the conviction of the teachers, there was no ground for any critical disquisitions upon the truth of what tradition was preserving wherewith to form our Gospels. But when those Gospels were erected into the absolute standards of Christian truth, when they were declared to be supreme over the conscience, and men were called upon, irrespective of their perceptions, to declare that all their contents were true, a protest was entered, and from that hour to the present it has been earnestly repeated. Brave men have, over and over again, demanded that at least some show of evidence should be furnished, but none was given, and they were silenced. What will the Church do, now that her own leading members are speaking out? What answer can be given to the Oxford Essayists? They have not told all the truth, as yet, and probably because the men were afraid of killing too many with fright all at once; they have more to tell, and it will be told. We rejoice greatly, because, now that the war has begun within the ranks of the clergy, there is every reason for hoping the heads of the Establishment will consent to put out a defence—not a diatribe, without either charity or reason. They are challenged to the proof now, and it will go hard if they do not find Butler to be a broken reed, from which no help can come; and, losing him, they may look out into the universe, and say, behold! we have no friend upon our side.

The Bishop of Oxford knew well enough what he was driving at when he said that a time of trouble was coming, in which churchmen would be severely tried; and while lamenting that the intellectual giants are no longer to be found within the charmed circles, he indicates his fear of failure. The Churches have trusted to the books and authority of the dead, but, as the writers were not conversant with the facts of science, as laid bare in modern times, they could not do more than meet the difficulties of their own age. To-day, the Church is called upon by her own children to justify her teaching, and to show that her sacred books are in harmony with that book of Nature, which never lies. It is useless for her to answer that Butler wrote his Analogy to satisfy all minds; useless to declare that his work is enough for all reasonable men. It has been weighed in the balances, and found wanting; for they who are earnestly seeking after the truth cannot any longer be satisfied with being told that the difficulties of revelation are to be overlooked, because there are kindred difficulties in nature.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—VIII.

LANGUEDOC; THE LAND OF HERESY.

EVEN as, in looking upon the physical world, we see the ocean ever impinging upon the land and washing it away, and the land constantly encroaching upon the ocean and driving it back, so in history we see a similar struggle going on between civilisation and barbarism—the difference being this, that, whereas the land and ocean mutually compensate for their several encroachments, and the balance remains always the same, civilisation is an ever-widening sea, destined in the end to submerge the barbarism with which it is at war. Some such movement as this was going on in Europe in the midst of the Dark Ages. The superstition and ignorance fostered by the Church, never utterly extinguished the science and learning of antiquity, or succeeded in destroying the germs of truth planted in a former time. We have seen that when civilisation was driven from the West it found a home in the East. These germs of truth had already made their appearance in the teachings of Berenger, Abelard, and others; while the wave of civilisation, which had receded for a time, was now again to impinge upon the European barbarism, and gradually gain upon it.

Taking a map of Europe, and tracing the frontiers of the present Empire of France, towards the South, it will be seen that a portion of Southern France forms the coast-line of the Mediterranean. The portion of France thus washed by the Mediterranean, and lying between the Pyrenees on the West and the Italian Alps on the East, was in the twelfth century a country distinct from France, known as Languedoc. "An aged land is this Languedoc," says Michelet, "you meet here ruins on ruins—the Camisards upon the "Albigenses, the Saracens upon the Goths, under these, the Romans, then "the Iberians." It may be called the cradle of European civilisation, for there it was the Greeks set up their first colony, long ere the Roman Empire was founded. Since then the Roman glory rose, and waned, and set, and rough Northern Goths took possession. Later on, but in a time which we call ancient, the Saracens swarmed over those Pyrenees and bid fair to make their footing good in this old land. There Charles Martel, the father of Charlemagne, fought out the matter with them, and drove them back into Spain. And in the twelfth century, once again emerged from barbarism, Languedoc, now the home of the Troubadours, has a language and a literature, while all the rest of Europe uses the barbarous dialects which sprang out of the junction of the Latin with the vernacular of the barbarians who seized the Roman provinces. No history, no poem, hardly a ballad or a song even has yet appeared in any other than the language of Languedoc, while the Provençal, the beautiful language of Oc, is already rich in poetry, satire, and song.

Thus, in the midst of the surrounding darkness, a civilisation had grown up in this Languedoc. A fertile country was well cultivated by an industrious people. Political freedom was existent among them, and each of the many rich cities of this region was a little republic. Feudalism had never made good its footing here, owing to the old Roman law, and the franchises arising out of it, never having been completely destroyed. This, then, was the country which became the scene of the first great insurrection against the despotism of the Church. Before, however, proceeding to the consideration of that, we must seek to understand why this Languedoc presented so strong a

contrast to the rest of Europe. The causes were manifold; but still, such as have ever been powerful to produce the same results. The people were a mixed race; Greek, Roman, Celt, Goth, and Saracen, had all contributed something. Moreover, Languedoc was in close proximity, throughout those Middle Ages, to Moorish Spain, and in constant intercourse with the Saracens. Here, long before they ventured into other parts of Europe, men versed in all the learning of the Saracen schools of Granada and Cordova, found a ready welcome. Among this polished people, merchants from all countries found a constant market for their wares, and in the marts of Narbonne and Toulouse men of all nations met, not a few of whom would become residents in a country at once fertile, wealthy, free, and civilised. In the contact of various races, as all history shows, there has ever lain one of the most powerful agencies of civilisation. Nor was it a contact of races only, but of creeds, opinions, manners, customs, thoughts, and ideas. Thus the Languedocians became cosmopolite and tolerant; they could not hate the Mussulman, with whom they came into such frequent contact, as did the Norman or the Breton, who met him only on the field of battle. The existence of great cities, too, with their charters and liberties, many of them dating from the Roman times, must be remembered as another cause of the civilisation of Languedoc, while the free and enlightened spirit of the citizens, tended to secure their continuance and to diffuse an atmosphere of freedom throughout the province—a freedom which was not only political but religious too. Something of the free spirit of the mountaineer was found here also from the close contiguity of the Alps and the Pyrenees.

In the presence of all these civilising agencies, and the absence of the two great degrading influences of an unreasoning faith in the Church and of Feudalism, we find no difficulty in understanding why the Provençals furnish us with the curious spectacle of civilisation in the midst of barbarism; nor why, when the time arrived, the spirit of religious liberty should find its home here; nor, alas! why Priestcraft should so ruthlessly seek to exterminate, not only the heresy, but the very people, when this, the earliest home of civilisation in Europe, became the theatre of the first great struggle between Priestcraft and Freedom. Through the Troubadours this spirit of freedom spoke. In their writings we learn what the moral and religious blemishes of the age were, and the corruption, vice, and cupidity of the Church and Priesthood formed the never-failing object of their keenest satire. As in the case of Berenger and the movement within the Church, so we find with the reform movements without the Church, that they commenced in the revolt of the moral sense. Long before any charge of heresy or false doctrine was made, or perhaps was possible, the Troubadours had attacked with boldness and vehemence the ambition, vice, and covetousness of the clergy; keen derision, coarse humour, and pointed satire were the instruments they used. Their attacks arose not out of any deep-seated indignation, but were made in the spirit of freedom against a class equally tyrannical and shameless. They saw the weak points, and these they attacked with weapons it was impossible to resist—those of ridicule and satire.

Many of the Provençal songs and poems have come down to our times, and in them we are enabled to read the spirit of the people and the character of the system they attacked. They said, "of the Church, that yielding to the cupidity by which she suffered herself to be governed, she sold pardons for all kinds of iniquity at a paltry price; of the priests, that they were eager to grasp wealth with both hands, whatever wretchedness it might occasion, that

"they sometimes used prayer and sometimes the sharp edge of the sword, as a means of persecution—deluding some with God, others with the devil; of Rome, that she despised God and the saints, and that craft and treachery of all kinds leagued together and lurked there."* "Viler than a priest!" "I would as soon be a priest!" became proverbial expressions in Languedoc. So great was the contempt of the Provençal gentry for the clergy that they would never bring up their children to the priesthood, and aided greatly in lowering the priestly office in the common estimation, by giving the livings to their servants and bailiffs. "I hold," said Raymond of Castelnau, "that St. Peter and St. Andrew were egregious fools to suffer so much for the sake of God, if the black monks, with their gluttony and love making, the white monks with their lying bulls, and the rest with their pride, usury, and cupidity, are to be saved also." Here spoke the true Provençal, and with the same feelings all classes of the people regarded the priests and monks. The Church was a by-word with them.

With the Provençal civilisation and literature, had come also freedom of thought and freedom of speech. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that Languedoc became the place where heresy first grew powerful. We must, just for a moment, glance at the sources whence the peculiar form of the heresy was derived. To find these, we have to travel back to the earliest times of Christianity. So is it ever, nothing is lost in history; the roots of the present lie deep down in the past. Manners and customs which we are in the daily habit of following, if traced to their sources, would be found to be connected with old Roman, or Greek, or Scandinavian, or even Egyptian superstitions and usages. Our Christmas Day, with its rejoicings, and strange associations, finds its historical explanation in the Norse mythology and the customs of heathen Rome; and it is the same with much else of our daily environment and common life. Thus, in sober truth, to-day is linked in a thousand ways with the oldest of the centuries. So it was that Paulicians, and Catharists, Bogomiles, and Manichees, sects which arose in the East in the earliest ages of the Christian era, and which, suffering persecution at the hands of the Greek Emperors and Church Authorities, had fled into the wild lands of Bulgaria, and the mountain fastnesses of the Alps, here, in this twelfth century, bore their fruit among the people of Languedoc. The concourse of men arriving at the marts of Narbonne and Toulouse, and other Provençal cities, had brought with them the doctrines which, though proscribed so long before, had never been utterly destroyed. The Paulician theology, which is represented to have been a mixture of the doctrines professed by the modern Calvinists, with others derived from the Manichees, had by far the largest share in the after-development of the Provençal heresy—producing on the one hand a rival Manichæan Church, having its Rome at Toulouse, and on the other, a great popular reformatory movement, represented by the Albigenses, the Waldenses, and others. With these arose the first great contest in which the Church was engaged, and which may be looked upon as the first act in the great drama of the Reformation. With this contest a new era commences both in the history of Europe and of the Church. The Spirit of Liberty and that of Priestly Despotism shall now stand face to face, and close in deadly combat. If the latter for a time appear to be the victor, it is only for a time; its seeming victory shall but tend to its defeat and ultimate overthrow.

JAS. L. GOODING.

* Neander, viii. 351. Raynouard, *Choix des Poésies Originales des Troubadours*.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS).

§ 8.—AS A PRIME MINISTER AND JUDGE.

ALTHOUGH in his early career, and in consequence of his thorough-going truthfulness and integrity, Confucius made himself many enemies in the higher ranks of statesmen, in a country like China, it was impossible for him to be kept out of public life. The constant talk about his wisdom, caused the various monarchs to desire to reap some advantages from employing him, the result of which was, that he spent many years in the public service, in various official capacities. And thus all the wisdom he had displayed as a teacher, was brought into play in a more practical shape. In the year 505 B.C., he was appointed to the office of chief municipal magistrate, and so admirably were his duties performed, that the king resolved upon raising him to the post of chief minister.

The philosopher appeared to doubt if he should accept this office, and when he had resolved upon answering affirmatively, he informed the king why he had hesitated. He frankly declared that one of the members, 'by his rapine, corruption, and vices, was the main cause of the evils which afflicted the kingdom; and that he must commence his new office by bringing this man to punishment, as a penalty due to his crimes and an example to others.' The king warned the philosopher that this individual had many friends, who might embarrass the government; but Confucius shrewdly observed, that such a person might have adherents, who would, however, readily desert him, but could have no friends. In short, within seven days after he had entered upon his functions, the minister was tried, convicted, and condemned by Confucius himself to be beheaded with the sword deposited in the Hall of Ancestors. All men, good and bad, even the philosopher's followers, were struck with amazement at this prompt and terrible act of severity. One of his disciples taxed him with precipitation, remarking that some method might have been devised to save a man of the minister's rank from so ignominious a fate, and to preserve to the country the benefit of his great talents and experience. Confucius acknowledged the splendid qualities of the minister; but observed that 'there were five classes of crimes which did not deserve pardon. The first were those meditated in secret, and perpetrated under the mask of virtue. The second consisted of incorrigibility, proved in grave matters, which involved the general good of society. The third were calumnious falsehoods, clothed in the garb of truth, in concerns of importance affecting the mass of mankind. The fourth unpardonable offence was vengeance cruelly inflicted, the result of hatred long cloaked under the semblance of friendship. The last was the uttering contradictory statements, in the same matter, according to the dictates of self-interest.' "Each of these crimes," said he, "merits exemplary punishment, and Shaou has been guilty of them all."

It was but natural that the people generally should be both pleased and astonished at the swiftness with which, when the new minister was employed, justice descended upon the robber. So little had they been accustomed to anything of that kind, they at first were almost unable to believe it; and when at length constrained to acknowledge its reality, they began to doubt if there were not some concealed motive which augured no good for them. Many of his disciples were in doubt about the propriety of the act; bringing

forward the old laws, they argued that men in such high stations should not be subject to the same measure of punishment as those in a lower station. Such, they said, was the old law and custom. He, however, was too well versed in those laws to be thus turned aside from justice; and as the writer says, who first furnished the account for Europeans, the exposition he gave of the old statute, is highly characteristic of a simple and virtuous age. In self-defence, he argued:—

“This law does not exempt from punishment those high officers who commit offences punishable in other men; it presumes, indeed, that individuals, who are intrusted with the correction of others, will not merit the penalty they inflict upon malefactors; but, should they have the misfortune to do so, it provides that their mode of punishment shall not degrade their rank and office. It was the aim and spirit of the ancient law to save the dignity even of a criminal; hence, it does not speak in distinct terms of crimes committed by a *tae-foo*, but employs a sort of allegory. Thus, flagrant debauchery, on the part of such a minister, or any act unworthy of his station, is veiled under this decent figure: ‘The vases and utensils used in sacrifices are in a filthy and improper condition; or the cloths in the place of sacrifice are torn and stained.’ Even where the faults are more directly adverted to, the terms are moderated. Thus, insubordination and cabals against the government, in a minister, are mildly characterized as not ‘fulfilling with exactitude the duties of a public functionary’; the infringement of any known law or custom, is said to be ‘conducting himself in an extraordinary manner.’ Great officers were, nevertheless, punished according to the magnitude of their offences; they pronounced their own sentence, when their crimes were established, and became their own executioners. A *tae-foo*, convinced of his culpability, cited himself before judges named by the sovereign, was his own accuser, sentenced himself, and applied for permission to die. The judges, after exhorting him to humility and repentance, proceeded to take the commands of the king. On their return, the culprit, dressed in mourning, his head covered with a white cap, appeared at the door of the tribunal, bearing the sword of execution in his hands. Falling on his knees, with his face turned towards the north, he awaited the result of his application. ‘Our master,’ one of the judges would say, ‘has graciously consented to your request: do what you think proper!’ The criminal then slew himself with the sword. In time, however, these ministers committed offences too openly to admit of these discreet disguises being observed. The people were not only the victims but the witnesses of their guilt. The simplicity of ancient regulations gave way to the demands of public justice and the very spirit of the ancient law, which would be violated by a slavish adherence to its letter. Shaou-chang-maou was guilty, in the face of the world, of the five unpardonable crimes; and by subjecting him to this public and ignominious fate, I have repaired, in some sort, the mischievous effects of his evil example, by showing that no rank or station, however high, affords impunity to crime. In making Shaou’s life the sole expiation of his deep guilt, I have been, perhaps, too lenient. The law has prescribed for rebellion against heaven and earth, extermination to the fifth generation; to the fourth, for resistance to superiors and magistrates; to the third, for frequent crimes against the natural law; to the second, for abolition of the worship of the *shin* and *kwei* (spirits); and for murder, or the procuring the death of another unjustly, death without mercy.” *

* Asiatic Journal, June 1843.

It is to be believed, that in no instance did the philosopher carry punishment so far as the third, or even the second generation. Such was the too common practice throughout the East, and it has been equally common in China, but we are not aware of any instance in which Confucius acted upon that principle.

He was a reformer, but not of the rabid school. It seems to have been his policy to be firm, but conciliatory, so that while he struck the unjust down without mercy, he was willing to win as many over as he could by his suavity and manner. When called upon to explain why he acted thus, he answered, 'I have formed the design of reforming all the various branches of government, by the co-operation of the respective functionaries of the state, to effect which I must possess their confidence and goodwill. If I were to appear to them in the repulsive garb of an austere sage, I should disgust them; they would regard me as hiding pride under the mask of modesty; I should be met by hypocrisy on their part, and all my plans would be traversed and defeated.'

In the exercise of his functions, he was brought into contact with many who were capable of furnishing him with information of the most valuable nature, regarding the evils of which the people had cause to complain; and while he was ever eager to discover them, he never failed to apply a remedy. There is a story told of how smartly he once dealt with a butcher, which even to the present hour affords great satisfaction to the Chinese. According to that narrative, there was a wealthy citizen who had contrived to secure to himself the exclusive sale of meat. His vast capital enabled him to pay ready money, and even to make advances to the needy owners of cattle; he became by degrees the proprietor of all the pasturages in the vicinity of the city; he bought cheaply, but he sold dear. The ordinary food of the people of Loo, and of China in general, consisted of boiled rice, seasoned with salt herbs; yet sometimes even the inferior classes gave feasts and entertainments, at which animal food was indispensable. The monopolist thus exacted a tax from every individual in the city, and his revenue was consequently enormous. Confucius sent for this individual, and gave him to understand that he knew the source of his unjust gains, for which he richly merited public punishment; but he made this equitable proposal to him: 'Restore,' said he, 'to the public what you have stolen from the public. I will put you in a way to do this without incurring disgrace. Reserve so much only of your property as will suffice to support you in ease and respectability, and place the residue at my disposal for the purposes of the state. Make no attempt to justify yourself, or to change my purpose: it will be vain. I give you a few days to think of the matter.' The monopolist, who believed he had secured impunity by the bribes he had distributed amongst the magistrates, found he had to deal with a man who was neither to be corrupted, duped, nor intimidated; he accordingly closed with the proposal.

In his official capacity, he occasionally sat as judge, and upon one occasion he furnished a proof of wisdom quite equal to that of Solomon. The case was that of a father who accused his son of a flagrant breach of filial duty, and invoked the full penalty of the law upon him. Confucius, to the surprise of the court and audience, instead of condemning the son, committed both father and son to prison for three months. At the end of this space, he summoned them before him, and asked the father of what he accused his son. The parent quickly exclaimed, 'He is innocent; if either of us be guilty, it is I, who accused my son in anger!' 'I thought so,' observed Confucius

calmly; 'go, and train your son in his duty; and, young man, remember, 'that filial piety is the basis of all moral obligations.' This decision provoked much discussion: Ke-sun, a minister, and one of the philosopher's disciples, asked why he, who held that the whole fabric of government rested upon the doctrine of filial piety, and who upheld the ancient maxim, that a disobedient son deserved death, should capriciously overlook such an offence? His answer was irrefragable. "My intention was," said Confucius, "that three classes of persons might deduce practical lessons from that case; namely,—children who failed in respect toward their parents,—parents who neglected the education of those to whom they had given birth,—and, lastly, persons filling judicial posts, who might perceive the danger of precipitate judgments on accusations dictated by passion. Had I acted upon the hasty charge of an irritated parent, I should have punished the son wrongfully, and plunged father and family in misery. A judge, who chastises indiscriminately all who appear to have violated the law, is not less cruel than a general who should put to the sword all the inhabitants of a town he has taken by assault. The offences of the inferior classes are often the result of ignorance, and lack, therefore the main ingredient of guilt. To punish such offenders rigorously is equivalent to condemning the innocent. A strict execution of the laws should fall upon the great and those in authority, whose guilty example is pernicious, and who fail to instruct their inferiors. To be indulgent towards the former, and severe towards the latter, is repugnant to justice and right reason. 'Punish even with death those who deserve chastisement,' says the ancient book; 'but do not forget that he is no criminal who has committed an offence without knowing it to be such.' Let us begin, therefore, by instructing the people, and we may then let loose the rigour of the law against those who, in spite of knowledge, fail in their social duties."

Here we are evidently trenching upon his political wisdom, a subject which must be reserved for our next paper, when our readers will see that Confucius taught political principles equal to the best of this advanced age.

P. W. P.

"HONOUR THY FATHER AND MOTHER."

Jesus is reported as saying, "Think not that I am here to destroy either 'the law or the prophets; I am not here to destroy but to fulfil." And in truth, "till heaven and earth pass away, not one Jot [Jod—the smallest of the 'Hebrew letters] or one tip of a letter shall pass from the law till all things come 'to pass," or in other words, "not even the least commandment shall be 'abrogated until the final consummation of all things." The speaker believed the final consummation was near at hand. No man among the trembling millions who trod the earth was more deeply convinced that the end of the world was at hand than he was; and they who listened, although in a less degree, shared his conviction. Many of his hearers believed he was about to repudiate the law of Moses, but he had no such idea, for he knew that, so far as its moral precepts were concerned, it was not Moses, but a Mightier One, who had established them; and as to the ceremonial law, he denied the common assumption about Moses having established it. Neither did he desire to repudiate the prophets, but to reinstate them in a practical form in

the mind of the nation. The poor blind souls of Jerusalem had come to look upon the law as a sort of heavenly medicine, as a panacea for all complaints, and the words of the old prophets were esteemed to be good, "when written on parchment" and worn round the neck, for keeping off the demons. It may be that, even in the lower sense, Jesus meant his hearers to understand it was not his aim to abrogate them; that, as a pious descendant of Abraham, he, too, felt some respect for the Law and the Prophets, in their objective sense; but it is equally true that he was conscious of the absurdity of supposing Moses or any other man could make laws and create guidance for a nation.

The celebrated Ten Commandments were not created by Moses, but were known long ages before any such man had gone out into the Desert to meditate the mysteries of God, nature, and mankind. "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, and bow down to no other." Did Moses make that, or did nature make and teach it to him, as she had taught it to many millions who had never heard the name of Jehovah, and who were never within the range of the sacred city? If the deep blue heavens and the bright stars may be believed, it was they and not Moses who first taught man to look with reverence and awe upon the Mighty Maker. As deep calleth unto deep, so do they speak unto somewhat within us, ever telling that we should "love the Lord God of the Universe." And their words are mightier than his. Were we to teach a blind man to bow in reverence before the Mighty Maker, he would, probably, obey our instructions, and might perhaps, even although somewhat incoherently and dimly, conceive a reason for doing so. But operate upon his eyes so as to endow that man with sight, and then take him suddenly out on a starry night to gaze upon the thousands of bright gems in that sea of ether, above and around; what a sight for the eye to rest upon! and how it must ravish the senses! He was blind but a day before, and now he is dumb. That childhood's wonder which so filled our own soul is now ravishing his. They are all so far off, and yet they speak softly to his deeper being, but in such language that no human phrases can adequately serve to express their utterances. What were the words of Moses compared with these? And yet, alas! men go to Moses to see what they are to do, as if the star-teachers were not older. There was much wisdom in the resolve of that Catholic, who, having heard that his priest confessed to the Bishop, the Bishop to the Cardinal, the Cardinal to the Pope, and the Pope to God, who charged nothing, said, "Then I will confess direct to God, and save my shilling." Why trouble about what Moses could not say well, while the stars still burn and teach the truth with so much more power and clearness? Jesus saw clearly enough that Moses did not make that law; saw that it existed from the very earliest time; and could not avoid wondering at the folly of men who believed that he was about to set it aside.

Perhaps, if our readers will look through all those laws of Moses, they will find out how little he had to do with them, and will perceive that he could not fairly write, much less create them. "Thou shalt honour thy father and mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Alas! poor Moses, who could not write out this ordinance of nature in any nobler form. It is but a slipshod way, a false way of putting the matter. And do our natural instincts fail us, as teachers? must we go to the fifth commandment to discover our duty to our parents? Ancient history records that a conquering general, who was about to destroy a city he had captured, remembered two young men in it who had done him a service, he sent

to inform them they were at liberty to leave, carrying with them as much of their treasure as could be borne about their person. They soon appeared at the gates, one bearing their father, the other their mother. Had they been to the fifth commandment of Moses to learn their duty towards their parents? Salimus records that upon one occasion, when the fiery lava of Etna was rolling into the district of Catania, two young men were seen scorched by the fire, but still bravely bearing up beneath their burdens; one carried a father, the other a mother, with whom they succeeded in reaching a place of safety. That was all the treasure they cared to save, and posterity held their memory in so much honour as to name the place of their sepulture the Field of the Pious.* Had they gone to Moses for instruction?

If we glance over the tragedies of Æschylus, or the poems of Homer, the works of Plato or Cicero, we shall discover passages in abundance in which men are taught this obedience, but the authors never conceived themselves to be teaching anything new, or founding a novel law. They were content with believing themselves to have given utterance to the ordinance of nature, and were persuaded that, whether they spoke it or were silent, mankind would still know their duty in this matter. Why, then, should we go groping among the Hebrew laws to find out what is our duty? why command a man to obey the law of Moses, when, in truth, that law is written upon our hearts, and we are instructed in its details by all the better instincts of our nature? We have all heard of men who repeat the speeches of others, and know well enough that they cannot bring the fire of thought to bear upon the sentences they are repeating.

Moses did but repeat nature without her fire and vigour. He gave only a poor translation of the original command, "Thou shalt honour thy parents!" And is that all? Thou shalt honour the king, and many others there are whom thou shalt honour, but surely they who gave us birth, who watched and tended us in infancy, and who made innumerable sacrifices in our behalf, must deserve something more than honour. The man who merely honours them, who does not in his heart of hearts love them, has lost some portion of his better nature, and has departed from the nobler instincts of his being. Yet poor Moses did his best, and we will be thankful; but as with painters who prefer to study the original works of Michael Angelo, instead of the poor copies made by inefficient copyists, so we will go, not to Moses, but to the voice of the Eternal, to be heard in nature, to learn our real filial duties. We can hear as clearly as he heard, for, no matter whether the question be one relating to filial duty, murder, theft, adultery, or covetousness, the oracles are not dumb, but as free of speech as when they taught the earliest men the path of duty. Jesus felt all this, and hence his feeling of surprise, not unmingled with sorrow, when he found that men imagined he was about to ignore or overthrow the law. He had perceived the deeper truth, that all the laws of human life and conduct preceded the human being, even as the laws of matter preceded the stone, and was content to utter in plain words that which he believed to be the law, without pretending to be its creator. He entertained not the remotest notion of becoming a lawgiver; but was convinced, as every thoughtful man is convinced, that the first good work for any man on earth is to find the truth of things, that which is the eternal law of them; and the next is to work them out in practical life. Not to make, but to discover and obey was his aim.

P W. P.

* Taylor's Civil Law, tit. "Power of the Father," p. 376.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF SOLOMON.

(Continued from p. 119.)

DIRECTLY David was no more, Solomon resolved to rid himself of the men who had thus acted against him, and he found abundant excuses. The man who is in possession of power, and who has resolved to play the despot, is never at a loss to find the appearance of cause against his victims. Adonijah was the first. This prince and elder brother desired to have to wife the young and beautiful "Shunamite woman," who had been selected for medical ends to serve his aged father. Still young and pure as Adonijah knew her to be, she seemed to him a compensation for the kingdom he had lost. To effect his end he visited Bathsheba and enlisted her good graces in his favour. With woman's natural eagerness upon such subjects, she visited her son Solomon, while sitting upon his throne, and asked that "one small favour." To her it was natural, and she doubted not that Solomon would say, "The Shunamite shall be given to him 'to wife,'" instead of which he declared that in thus asking Adonijah had signed his own death-warrant. "Why not ask for the kingdom?" Solomon "can see," as the commentators say, "a plot." That a plot existed is not hinted, but of course it is suggested as a fair means of getting Solomon out of the difficulty. Say there was a plot, and at once we have the after death reduced to the form of punishment of treason. But how did Solomon proceed? Did he institute any inquiry? Did he cause any parties to be examined? Certainly not. He heard the request of his mother, and answered, "And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunamite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom also; for he is mine elder brother, and both Abiathar the priest and Joab the son of Zeruiah are for him. Then King Solomon swore by the Lord, saying, 'God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken the word against his own life. . . . Adonijah shall be put to death this day. And King Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada, and he fell upon him that 'he died.'*" Now I do not urge that in doing this, in killing his brother, he did any more than was common in his age with the monarchs of the East, for I believe he did not, but we have a right to look for something above the common from a man in his position, raised and guided by God. The heathen, as they are termed, did these things, and we regret them; but if Solomon could do the same with impunity, then it is strange that the heathen doing them should be exposed to such severe condemnation, for either the acts are right or wrong, whether done by Solomon or by the heathen. But although Adonijah was no more, there were others living who had shared his adventure. The high priest and Joab. Abiathar was not put to death. Probably Solomon conceived that such a sacrifice would endanger his throne with the priestly caste, and hence he was cautious enough to rest content with removing him from the office of high priest, appointing Zadoc in his place. Where was the Mosaic law then? What gave the king the right over the priest? Would Samuel have recognised the authority? Abiathar was confined to his estate in Anathoth; but Joab was slain. He rushed to the horns of the altar, but although he had been so many years in the service of David, there was no mercy, and he was hewn down even at the altar. Shimei, too, was caught some time after. He had been pardoned and his safety secured, only that he was not to leave his estate was the bond. Two of his servants fled from him, and he went to Gath to recover them, but had to pay the price thereof with his life. Solomon told him there could be no pardon for his innocent breach of the bond, and he also fell. The David family were fond of bloodshed. There was a wild savagery in their natures; for although they loved splendour, it was only as Genghis Khan did, and the savage occasionally showed from beneath the purple robes.

* 1 Kings, iii, 21-6;

When the work of revenge, state policy, or punishment, which we simply denominate "murder," was over, Solomon looked around to find a wife, and soon married a princess of Egypt. The critics seem to be unanimous in their opinion that he manifested wisdom in making his choice, and there not only is no reason to differ from them in this, but excellent ones in abundance to confirm their view. The reasons for doing so lie in the fact that, when the king of a savage or uncivilised and ignorant people marries the daughter of a monarch who rules a more advanced nation, he is sure to be advantaged by the knowledge and arts the bride's attendants will introduce. And the Jews were much in need of some such assistance. As we shall presently see, with all the boasting of their superiority, they were even yet incapable of undertaking any important building operations without the architectural guidance and handicraft assistance of foreigners. So that policy dictated to Solomon that he should seek a wife in the neighbouring countries. But, as Dr. Adam Clarke confesses, by this marriage he violated the Mosaic law. That law forbade such connection with the heathen. The instructions had invariably been that they were to make no covenant with the uncircumcised, but to slay them all: "Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves. . . . Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; and thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods." * It is put in an equally strong form in another passage: "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son." † Thus, however wisely Solomon may have acted, politically considered, he violated the law of Moses by entering into this marriage.

This, however, is presupposing him to have known of the existence of such a law, which I deny, and find my perfect justification in the whole course of the history. It was not then in existence; had it been so, then the temple and its institutions would have been modelled upon its injunctions, which they were not. It is, however, so generally assumed that Solomon was well versed in the Mosaic law, that it is impossible to discuss the incidents of his career from any other point of view. If not impossible, it would be useless. We are interested in the reign of Solomon, because of certain theological theories which have been mixed up with it, and are constrained, in order to disprove those theories, to assume the correctness of many points which would otherwise be repudiated. As, for instance, I have no doubt that Solomon acted wisely in making this match, but immediately the question of his piety and obedience to Jehovah comes into view, associated with the Mosaic standard, it is necessary to denounce him as a great sinner. And they who undertake to assert the fact of his piety and obedience are bound to furnish some proof, and to harmonise the contradictions. This has been attempted in various ways, without, however, achieving the object in view. There is one party which assumes that such marriages were strictly forbidden only in the case of the Canaanites, ‡ but it is evident that the Hebrews, according to that law, were forbidden to marry any daughter of the heathen. It was not a question of what country they belonged to, for the law forbade them to give their sons and daughters to any who believed not in Jehovah, lest they should be induced to abandon Him for the Gods of those to whom they were wedded.

It has been argued by many that this Egyptian princess had abandoned the faith of her fathers, so that Solomon would have no difficulty in making her his own without breach of law. There is no evidence to that effect, and it is merely a conjecture indulged in to save the credit of the hero. Of course, it is by no means improbable. Monarchs have been very absolute in demanding religious conformity, while themselves have been living in flagrant violation of all laws, human and divine. They seem to care less for religion than any other people do, and are ready

* Exodus xxxiv. 12-16.

† Deut., vii. 3,

‡ Keil on Kings, vol. i., p. 57.

enough to abandon a creed when profit is to be made by the adoption of its rival. Our Royal Elizabeth and James were very particular about the creed of their subjects, yet they had not hesitated about changing their own, or professing to do so. Thus, this princess may have changed her faith, as I think is highly probable, because, in fact, there was very little to change. To the poor, ignorant Egyptian it would seem a great matter to abandon all his Gods, but his educated countrymen were not kept so ignorant of the deeper mysteries which Moses had learnt. They found in the Hebrew system little more than in their own; its festivals, order of priests, temples, processions, arks, tabernacles, &c., were all the same, and hence the Egyptian princess could have "changed her faith" without doing a tithe of the violence which is done to the conscience or professions of modern royal brides under similar circumstances.

Of the splendour of this marriage we know nothing, but there is a fragment of poetry belonging to it which is worthy of your notice. It is called the forty-fifth Psalm, and is spoken of by many as being one of the "sweet revelations of a coming Saviour." It is extraordinary what an amount of nonsense has been written upon this Psalm, for, like the Song of Solomon, it is considered to be a spiritual poem, and that, too, in defiance of so many sentences which negative the theory. In our authorised version it bears the inscription, "To the Chief Musician upon Shoshannim, for the Sons of Korah, Maschil, A Song of Loves." Calmet believes that "Shoshannim" signifies an instrument of six strings, or a "song of rejoicing." The latter can hardly be true, because the same term is used in other places where rejoicing is not meant, and thus it most probably relates to the stringed instrument employed. The best commentators agree in treating the Psalm as an epithalamium, and it needs only to be read attentively to satisfy all parties how true is that conclusion:—

1. My heart boils up with goodly matter.
I ponder; and my verse concerns the King.
Let my tongue be a ready writer's pen!
2. Fairer art thou than all the sons of men.
Over thy lips delightsomeness is pour'd:
Therefore hath God for ever blessed thee.
3. Gird at thy hip thy hero-sword,
Thy glory and thy majesty;
And forth victorious ride majestic,
For truth and meekness, righteously;
And let thy right hand teach thee wondrous deeds.
Beneath thy feet the peoples fall;
For in the heart of the king's enemies
Sharp are thy arrows.
4. Thy throne divine ever and always stands:
A righteous sceptre is thy royal sceptre.
Thou lovest right and hatest evil;
Therefore hath God, thy God anointed thee
With oil of joy above thy fellow-kings.
Myrrh, aloes, cassia, all thy raiment is.
From ivory palaces the viols gladden thee.
King's daughters count among thy favourites;
And at thy right hand stands the Queen
In gold of Ophir.
5. O daughter, hark! behold! and bend thy ear:
Forget thy people and thy father's house.
Win thou the King thy beauty to desire;
He is thy lord: do homage unto him.
So Tyrus' daughter and the sons of wealth
With gifts shall court thee.



6. Right glorious is the royal damsel :
Wrought of gold is her apparel.
In broder'd tissues to the King she is led :
Her maiden-friends, behind, are brought to thee.
They come with joy and gladness,
They enter the royal palace.
7. Thy fathers by thy sons shall be replaced ;
As princes o'er the land shalt thou exalt them.
So will I publish to all times thy name ;
So shall the nations praise thee, now and always.*

The marriage over, Solomon undertook to sacrifice to God at Gibeon : " And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there ; for that was the great high place : a " thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar."† Is it not curious that another breach of the law should be so soon committed ? Solomon goes to Gibeon, and sacrificed, not only without being reproved, but with approbation ; but when Saul sacrificed, although he had waited several days for Samuel, and his subjects were becoming faint-hearted, he was branded as disobedient to God for daring to offer his burnt sacrifice. That lost him the confidence of the people, for Samuel, in the true priestly spirit, turned against him. Are we to believe that God had anything to do with that contradiction, or shall we say that Samuel had no successor to assert the same principle, and to raise the priesthood above royalty ? To my thinking, it is clear enough, that when Solomon went forth to Gibeon to sacrifice, he was merely doing as all the other kings of the East had done, for he knew nothing of Moses, and knew only of the kingdom David had established.

But here we touch upon that " grand and solemn event " in the life of Solomon which is presumed by the orthodox theologians to be the most remarkable in his whole career, and as furnishing the evidence of his wisdom being such as to transcend the wisdom of all others who have been distinguished among mankind. All that skill in rhetoric could do towards impressing us with a sense of the importance of this occurrence has been done, and were I merely to enumerate the essays and sermons directed to that single end, the entire of the time at my disposal this evening would be exhausted. The event I allude to is his asking God to endow him with wisdom, which is thus related :—" In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast shown unto thy servant David my father great mercy, " according as he walked before thee in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness " of heart with thee ; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou " hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day."‡ It is, of course, perfectly natural that a son should say the best he could for his father ; no man, in modern times, however earnest he may be in declaiming against the popular theory about the piety and purity of King David, thinks of denouncing Solomon for saying the best he could of his own parent ; but still there is something peculiarly painful in reading passages of this character. If the Church were candid enough to confess that all these narratives are of human origin, the same difficulty would not be felt, for, in that case, there would be no very grave objection to the language that orthodox men could not get over. The freer mind, however, would still be pained by the fact that Solomon could utter such sayings, feeling, as he must have done, that they were not true. No man would justify the son of Mullins, the murderer, going down upon his knees, and saying to God that his father had walked in truth and righteousness. If he were to do it publicly in any church or chapel in the land, it would be accounted blasphemy. Neither could we marvel at the feeling called forth against such an abuse of language.

(To be continued.)

* Newman's Hebrew Monarchy, p. 126.

† 1 Kings iii. 4.

‡ Ibid. iii. 5, 6.

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OF "SATAN" AS A POWER IN THE UNIVERSE.

IN modern days we have so many real evils to contend against that it is almost criminal, if not wholly so, to spend time beating the air and arguing about evils which have no existence save in imagination. There are, however, some exceptions to be made. To discuss the popular theory about the "fallen angels" and the "power of Satan" is one of them; and, indeed, although the entire theory may be untrue, its influence is mighty, and it operates most powerfully to retard the progress of mankind.

And is it not necessary to consider the question whether the "Christian Godhead" contains four or only three persons? The Creeds declare in very precise terms that there are but three persons who make one God; but immediately they go on, although in another form, to demonstrate that there are four—God, the Father; God, the Son; God, the Holy Ghost; and God, the Devil; and, accepting the narratives they furnish, it is difficult to perceive any other meaning than this—that "God, the Devil," is considered to be, practically, the most powerful of the four. This is not said in satire, but in sorrow; it is not intended to discuss the subject in a mocking vein, but with all seriousness; neither do we aim at furnishing food for merriment, for, to our mind, the theme is one of the most painful which it is possible for any man to broach. And that it should need discussion in an enlightened age will be held by many to be a sufficient proof that the boasted enlightenment is not so much mental and religious as it is physical and commercial.

Accepting the orthodox narratives of the Creation, with the early history of the world and its inhabitants, is it possible to account for the events of time without presupposing the existence of some Spiritual Power who has operated in such ways as to produce the various evils which have afflicted mankind? And if the existence of such a Being be recognised, then, must it not also be acknowledged, that he exerts far more influence over the destiny of men and nations than has ever been exerted by the Being commonly called God? If such questions be proposed to an orthodox man, he shrinks back from them with a feeling akin to horror. Whatever there may be painful about such inquiries, however, belongs not to the questions proposed, but to the popular theology, which compels men to think; although, through terror of what will be said, they may hold their peace about their thoughts.

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It is from that system we learn that the Devil is the most powerful Being in the Universe. True it is, that its expounders will not state the proposition in the form we have given it, and if called upon to express their ideas, they would declare against it; yet, as a fundamental principle, the teaching furnished by them necessarily involves it. As a general truth, nothing can be clearer than that many of them rely upon it for their success. Were it not for the character they give to the Devil, and the stories they tell of his doings and power, many of them would be speedily ruined. He who cannot fill his church through dwelling upon the Majesty and Wisdom of God attains his object by dwelling upon the malignity and fierceness of the Devil; and if a congregation cannot be held together by the bond of love for God and goodness, they are kept from scattering through their fear of the Devil and his schemes of torture. More churches are filled through the fear of Hell than the love of Heaven. Not the wondrous works of God, but the fire and brimstone of Satan, are dwelt upon, and hence comes success. And the poorest in intellect can thus win support from those who otherwise would despise them; but when such men have filled the souls of their hearers with this sort of trash, how much better have they made them? It is a poor affair when men become religious, not through loving the Infinite Good, but through fearing being broiled by the Infinite Evil. Such a religion, based as it must be upon cowardice and selfishness, will not pass muster in the kingdom where the good and the true rest from their labours.

The theory of our Churches, when stripped of the idle modifications and apologies, is the most astonishing product of time. None of the Buddhists, Parsees, or Tartars, although well-skilled in such matters, are able to produce a scheme equal to this of Christendom. Taken in all plainness, the theory stands thus:—

Originally, God was surrounded by countless millions of pure unsullied spiritual beings who ministered unto and glorified Him, and dwelt in seats of blessedness and abodes of peace. He had created them pure and holy, and as the ages rolled away there was neither sin nor the thought of sin; but, unhappily, the sinful thought and the wicked deed eventually came into being, and the blessed peace was broken. The spirit of ambition stirred in the breast of the chief among the spirits, who, resolving to usurp the supreme power, took many angelic spirits into his confidence, and eventually formed an immense party—a third of the angels joined him, and held themselves ready to promote his aims.

In consequence of this there was a war in heaven, "which hung long doubtful," but eventually Satan, with the "wicked ones" who had adopted his cause, were cast out and plunged into a lake of fire and brimstone; which, in a miraculous manner, is intended to burn through all ages. The fall from heaven of Satan is supposed to be confirmed by the words of Jesus:—"I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven;"* and of his companions by the passage in Jude:—"And the angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of that great day."† There are passages in "The Book of Revelation" which are supposed to confirm this view.‡

Heaven having been so considerably depopulated, and the ranks of its ministering spirits so fearfully thinned through this revolt, Jehovah resolved upon creating a race of human beings who, in time, should grow up into powers

* Luke x. 18.

† Jude, 6.

‡ Revelation of St. John, xii. 7-13.

capable of filling the heavenly voids; to that end He began to clothe our earth with objects of beauty and usefulness. He created the various tribes of animated nature, and finally made man and woman, having previously prepared a garden of beauty in which to place them. He bade them increase and multiply and replenish the earth; gave them dominion over it, and then retired to gaze in love and tenderness upon all that which He had made. All things were for His glory; but man especially, the very crown of creation, was conceived as redounding to the glory and honour of His designing mind. All His works were fair; He pronounced them to be good, and intended they should continue to show forth His goodness and love, without either suffering pain or being subject to change and disaster. Such is the common theory of Creation. And now we must glance at the person and the process through which, according to the same theory, the Supreme was baulked in His designs.

While the work of creation was proceeding, the Mighty One who had fallen was watching the process and wondering at the forms produced. Eventually, when the whole had been completed, and man stood forth clothed with reason and endowed with speech, the Arch-Deceiver perceived that the aim of his creation was to fill the void himself had made in the heavenly ranks, and resolved to defeat the plan. Pondering upon how this was to be achieved, he visited the new-born world, heard the new-made pair conversing, and saw they were weak enough to be seduced into disobeying their Maker. He perceived they had not been constituted with sufficient strength to resist the temptations to which he could expose them. When the trial was made, his conclusions proved to be quite correct; for the woman ate of the fruit of a tree which she had been forbidden to touch, and then gave unto the man, who also ate of it; after which their eyes were opened, and they saw their true condition. This act of disobedience was speedily discovered by their Maker, who cursed the deluding Spirit; but, although punishing the man and woman, He promised that when ages had elapsed He would send One who should have power to save some of their deluded descendants.

The new creatures thus fell from the state of purity into the condition of sinners, so that their Maker could no longer love or treat them with respect; and from that hour Satan gained a firm hold of the mind and heart of the race which had been expressly created to defeat his purposes. The human family grew in number, and grew equally in sin; so that, when but a few centuries had passed away, the Infinite was compelled to drown the world and blot out the human race; saving only one pious man, Noah, and his family. But here again the Evil One gained a victory, for this pious man gave way to his appetite and was drunken. Ages passed, still sin increased, and the Infinite resolved to select one family from which to produce a faithful, pious nation; but when it had been established, instead of exhibiting the spirit of obedience, it rebelled and became even more perverse than those which had not been specially raised up and instructed. Thus the Evil One had not only succeeded in destroying the peace of Heaven with the earliest hope of the new race, but had also won over to his purposes every one whom God had specially appointed to work on the side of goodness, and to produce the fruits of obedience and piety.

We shall return to and complete our investigation of this subject.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—IX.

PETER WALDUS.

PETER WALDUS, or Waldensis, was a native of Lyons. The year of his birth, like all that concerns his early life, is uncertain; tradition, however, points to the year 1180. All that is certain is that his birth took place before the middle of the twelfth century. As one of the city magnates—or, as men would then say, a “man of worship”—we meet with him for the first time when attending an assembly of the chief citizens of Lyons, met for the transaction of business connected with the municipality. The occasion was rendered remarkable by the routine of business being interrupted by the sudden death of one of the assembled town council. Human nature is at all times and everywhere the same; and we, looking back through seven hundred years at this incident, and although so large an interval of time separates us from the men assembled there, can easily imagine the feelings of those “grave and reverend seigniors” when the death angel thus suddenly appeared in their midst. We know the hush, the thrill, the shudder which would pass through any meeting in the present day if such an event befel, and have, therefore, no difficulty in saying that this assembly, of which Peter Waldus formed one, would be similarly affected.

To see lying before us the lifeless form, but now instinct with thought and motion, to behold the ashen cheek, the bloodless lips, the fixed, unseeing eyes, is at any time an impressive sight; but when he who but now was in our midst, walking on our path, talking to us, filled with the same ideas, and working to a common object with ourselves, is suddenly away called to that “bourne whence no traveller returns,” what strange thoughts inevitably come over us! Moved in the very depths of our souls, we ask ourselves, if we never asked before, What is this life of ours? what this death which, at some time or other, we all have to meet? Bring the most thoughtless face to face with Death, and solemn thoughts of Life’s mysteries, of Time and Eternity, of God and Immortality, will take possession of their souls. So it is, so was, and ever will be while man is man, and mortal. Shall we wonder, then, when we learn that this incident in that Lyons Town Council left on the mind of Peter Waldus “so powerful an impression that he resolved to abandon all “other concerns, and to occupy himself solely with the concerns of religion”—to settle for himself, if haply he might, those great problems which, at some time in their lives, most men have to settle for themselves, in some sort and fashion?

And where should he turn for instruction? To the priests? Alas! they would be but blind leaders of the blind. The priests? They who were lapped in vice and sensuality, and as ignorant as they were vicious—they who were a proverb and a by-word of reproach in the mouths of his countrymen? Nay, had he not heard in the disputes of the market-places of Lyons, and the other cities which, as a merchant, he had been in the habit of visiting, Paulicians and others?—had he not heard it there asserted that a man who wanted the truth must go to the fountain-head, and read the Scriptures and the writings of the early Fathers? Now, Peter is rich; and, guided by a desire to arrive at the truth he seeks, he will lay out a portion of his wealth in translating this Bible and the writings of these Fathers—or, at least, some portions of them—into the Romance language. So we learn from the historian, “he gave to two ecclesiastics—one, Stephen de Ansa, a man of some learning;

"the other, Bernard Ydros, who was a practised writer—a certain sum of money, on condition they would prepare for him a translation of the Gospels and other portions of the Bible into the Romance language, which one was to dictate, the other write down. He procured to be drawn up," continues the narrator, "also, by the same persons, a collection of sayings of the Church Fathers, on matters of faith and practice—so called *Sententie*."*

And now Peter sets to work to study these translated treasures. The first result of his studies is that he becomes "seized with an earnest desire to follow the Apostles in evangelical poverty," and also, like them, to spread abroad his newly-discovered truth among his fellow-men. As a consequence of this, he distributed all his property, rich and wealthy burgher as he was, amongst the poor, and founded a spiritual society of "Apostolicals." He had numerous copies of his translated Gospels made, and gradually extended the translation to the entire Bible. These he, and others whom he had persuaded to join him in his work, lent for reading and carried about with them from place to place, and were very zealous in this work. Ere long, Peter began to preach to people of the truth he had got, and of "the way of salvation" open to them.

It was about the year 1160 that Peter took upon himself the office of preacher; Priestcraft looked on with no pleasant feelings at a man of truth and earnestness thus, without leave or license, invading its domain, and teaching the people truths of which it would fain have kept them ignorant—but the people heard him gladly. The people ever hear such men gladly; honest words spoken earnestly always find an audience anxious to listen. So Peter's preaching was not without its effect. The Archbishop of Lyons undertook to proscribe the unauthorised teacher; Peter, however, declared that he was bound to obey God rather than man, and persevered in the work he had begun. Societies sprang up throughout Languedoc, in the Alps, and afterwards in Lombardy—the work grew, and others soon associated themselves with Peter in this preaching business. Of Peter and his fellow-labourers we have this record from Walter Mapes, a Franciscan monk: "They have no settled place of abode. They go about barefoot, two by two, in woollen garments, possessing nothing, but like the Apostles, having all things in common; following, naked, him who had not where to lay his head."

Peter Waldus was no polemic; he did not go forth to discuss old doctrines, or to inculcate new ones, but to teach duties; practical religion was the thing he sought to establish in the hearts and actions of men. He aimed not so much at changing the existing system of religion, as at restoring the morals of the clergy and the lives of Christians to that primitive and apostolic simplicity which he believed characterised the early times of the Church, and which he thought was involved in the teachings of Christ. He taught that, in the time of Constantine, the Church had degenerated from its original purity and sanctity. He denied the supremacy of the Pope. He inveighed against the rich, luxurious, and vicious priesthood, and enforced the duty of the rulers and ministers of the Church to imitate the poverty of the Apostles, and procure a frugal and slender sustenance by manual labour. He asserted that authority to teach and admonish their brethren was given to all Christians. He said it was not necessary for people to confess their sins to the priests, but only to lay open their transgressions to their brethren, and look to them for advice. He wished to restore the ancient penitential system, which had now become almost entirely subverted by grants of indulgences,

* Neander viii. 351.

which he denounced as an invention of avarice. The power of forgiving sins, and remitting their punishment, he held to belong only to God.* Such may be looked upon as a correct summary of the views of Waldus and his associates; their preaching was, therefore, thoroughly practical and moral in its tendency, and calculated to deal a heavy blow at the system of priestcraft set up by the Church. Afterwards, on the part of the followers of Peter, the doctrinal differences involved in his teaching became much more prominent, and the heresy more observable.

Our readers will easily understand, from what we laid before them last week, how these men, standing in opposition to the hierarchy of the Church, protesting against priestcraft both in word and action, would be hailed by the free-spirited people of Languedoc. In the Alps there had been, as we have previously mentioned, from the earliest times of the State-Church, communities of heretics who had fled from persecution in the East, and these, of course, would be ready listeners to the preaching of Peter. The effect of his labours in the Alpine valleys continued down into far later times, in connection with the Waldensian heresy, which gave so sad a glory to the after history of Piedmont.† The followers of Peter multiplied with amazing rapidity, and there was scarcely a country in Europe where they did not gain some footing. No amount of persecution ever entirely extirpated them, and we may justly look on Peter Waldus as one of the most important of the early forerunners of the Reformation. He, in fact, spoke to the spirit of the time; and the sect he established had all the strength which earnestness and virtue ever give. "There is no sect so dangerous," said Saccho the Dominican, "for, while others are profane and blasphemous, this retains the show of piety; they live justly before men, and believe nothing respecting God which is not good; only they blaspheme against the Roman Church and the clergy, and thus gain many followers."

Seeing, then, what Waldus and his followers were, and what they taught, considering, too, how great and rapid a success they achieved, we cannot wonder that Priestcraft hated them. Nay, rather, would not the wonder have been if those whose vices they exposed, whose lives they condemned both in speech and action, whose power they sought to destroy, and whose teachings they denied, had done aught else but hate them? It was by departing from that "primitive and apostolic simplicity" which these new teachers sought to restore, that the Church and priesthood had grown rich and powerful. Here were men, too, who actually had the audacity to say that those who had grown fat in idleness—who, under the garb of piety, were lapped in sensuality and luxury, should earn their own "frugal sustenance" by the labour of their hands. Not only did they say this, but gave in their own lives a proof of its practicability—thus adding to their arguments the mighty logic of action. Besides which, they denied the special sanctity of the priesthood, teaching that every man is a priest to himself—so striking at the very existence of the hierarchy. In all this, we see good reason why priestcraft should hate these men, and also good reason why we should hold their memory in honour. In the very things which induce respect for them on the part of all good men, we recognise the cause of the merciless severity evinced by the Church towards them.

JAS. L. GOODING.

* Mosheim, Cent. xii. p. ii. c. v. See also Neander's account, Vol. viii.
† It is a matter exceedingly doubtful whether Peter gave or received his name of Waldus, or Waldensis, by his connection with the Alpine heretics. It is probable that *Waldenses*, or *Pseudois*, signified the "men of the valleys," and that Peter of Lyons became known as "Peter of the Valleys" from his work among them.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS).

§ 2.—DISCOURSE WITH A PRINCE ON GOVERNING.

WHILE Confucius was the Chief Minister, he fell frequently into conversation with the king, and many of their debates have been preserved. Rather, perhaps, it would be nearer the truth to say, the part the sage took in them; for the monarch merely asks questions which open the way for the philosopher to deliver his ideas upon the subject thus named. And it is astonishing to all, who do not perceive that the under currents of earnest thought upon a matter of importance must run in the same direction, to find that in such an early age this man, so far removed from the other nations of antiquity, still held by the truths and principles of government which are so earnestly asserted by the advanced reformers of England. He never doubted about the worth of honour, or of the power and strength which justice, and these alone, can confer upon a nation.

Upon one occasion he was questioned about the constituent principles of a good government, and without discussing the relative advantages of a monarchy, a despotism, or a republic, he immediately proceeded to the very heart and soul of the question. Let the reader try to reach his meaning in the following passage. "The laws of the kings Wen and Wou were consigned to bamboo tablets; if their ministers were living now their laws would be in vigour: their ministers have ceased to be, and their principles of good government are no longer followed. The combined virtues and qualities of the ministers of a prince make the administration of a state good, as the virtue of the earth, uniting the moist and the dry, gives forth and causes to grow the plants which cover its surface. This good administration resembles the reeds which are on the borders of rivers: it springs up naturally on a soil that is suitable to it."

Could the dullards of modern days but manage to see into this, what a blessing it would be for all! But Confucius had his dullards to deal with, and felt the oppression of men who looked upon public offices as cows which were bound to give them the due supply of milk. They had no other notion, and as to proving the means through which a country was to grow great, they neither knew nor cared how to do it. Time soon shewed what Confucius could do in this matter, although, with a wise prudence, he always kept within the due limits; never undertaking to do for the citizen that which he should do for himself.

But according to his theory the prince also had his duties, and there were modes of study through which he was to reach the height of perfection. In the conversation above quoted, he said, "A prince who wishes to imitate the old administration of the kings must choose his ministers according to his own sentiments, which must be always inspired by the public good. That his sentiments may always have the public good for their moving principle, he must conform himself to the great law of duty, and this great law of duty must be searched for in humanity, which is the principle of love for all men. This humanity is *man himself*: regard for relations is the first duty of it."

Evidently the Chinese sage had no design of flattering kings or rendering easy the lives of princes. There is the summary of what they should do to become worthy of their position and to win renown. The deepest and noblest principle of action is there set forth; and the most pious Biblicalist may be chal-

lenged to produce a purer or nobler piece of advice for kings. "*The great law of duty must be searched for in humanity, which is the principle of love for all men,*" is a line which may be written over our doors and upon our hearts, as one of the noblest ever penned. What other is there to surpass it? They who write of this man as a Pagan, as the Cummings and Cantwells do, are evidently ready to blaspheme God at any moment, in order to promote the interests of their Little Zion, and its blatant pieties. If Jesus is to be so highly honoured for saying that men should love one another, then let the same measure be meted out to Confucius; for his saying was equally beautiful and precise. Is there not, too, in the following, a clear recognition of principles to which the nations of the West are only just beginning to open their eyes, but which must be universally accepted?

"All virtuous actions, all duties which have been resolved beforehand, are thereby accomplished; if they are not resolved upon, they are thereby in a state of infraction. If we have determined beforehand the words which we must speak, we shall not hesitate. If we have determined beforehand our affairs and occupations in the world, they will thereby be easily accomplished."

"The perfect, the true, disengaged from all mixture, is the law of heaven. The process of perfection, which consists in using all one's efforts to discover the celestial law, the true principle of the mandate of heaven—this is the law of man. The perfect man attains this law without help from without; he has no need of meditation, or long reflection to obtain it; he arrives at it with calmness and tranquillity. This is the holy man: He who is continually tending towards perfection, who attaches himself strongly to the good, and fears to lose it, is the sage."

There has never yet been given to the world a better definition of the truly holy man; and, as will be shown in another paper, Confucius was not to be deluded upon the great theme of religion. He knew that all growth is "from within," not from without; and knew for a certainty that all the power we can have must rest upon our inward strength of thought and independent life.

The prince, however, was not yet dismissed. He must listen to advice about how he is to correct himself and gain the highest stage of fitness as a ruler. "The prince can never cease to correct himself and bring himself to perfection. Having the purpose of correcting and perfecting himself, he cannot dispense with the rendering to his relations that which is due to them. Having the purpose of rendering to his relations that which is due to them, he cannot dispense with the acquaintance of wise men, that he may honour them, and that they may instruct him in his duties. Having the purpose of obtaining the acquaintance of wise men, he cannot dispense with the knowledge of heaven, nor with the law which directs in the practice of prescribed duties."

"The most universal duties for the human race are five, and the man possesses three natural faculties for practising them. The five duties are: the relations which subsist between the prince and his ministers, the father and his children, the husband and his wife, the elder and younger brother, and those of friends among themselves. *Conscience, which is the light of intelligence to distinguish good and evil; humanity, which is the equity of the heart; moral courage, which is the force of the soul,—these are the three grand and universal moral faculties of the man.*"

Modern ethical teachers will raise objections to this theory about the

results being everything, the aim nothing. They contend that there is no goodness to be ascribed to the doer of a good deed, unless his motives were pure, whereas the Sage seems to say the motive is unimportant so long as the desired result be reached. To some extent there is a mere playing with words, although, at the same time, there is a distinction of no unimportant nature. But it is to be borne in mind that it was as a statesman he was speaking, not as a moralist. His theory finds in that fact a justification, for the statesman is bound, while not overlooking wrong actions, to judge greatly from the aggregate results, no matter how arrived at.

The following passages from the same discourse are worthy of close study. "Whether nature is sufficient for the knowledge of these universal duties—whether study is necessary to apprehend them, whether the knowledge is arrived at with great difficulty or not—when one has got the knowledge, the result is the same. Whether we practise these duties naturally and without effort, whether we practise them for the sake of getting profit and personal advantage from them—when we have succeeded in accomplishing useful works, the result is the same.

"He who loves study, or the application of his intelligence to the search of the law of duty, is very near to acquire moral science. He who devotes all his efforts to practise his moral duties is near that devotion to the happiness of man which is called humanity. *He who knows how to blush for his weakness in the practice of his duties is very near to acquire the force of mind necessary to their accomplishment.*

"So soon as the prince shall have well regulated and improved himself, straightway the universal duties will be accomplished towards him. *So soon as he shall have learnt to revere wise men, straightway he will have no longer any doubt about the principles of truth and falsehood, of good and evil*; so soon as his parents shall be the objects of the affection which is due to them, straightway there will be no more discussions between his uncles, his elder brothers and his younger brothers; so soon as he shall treat, as it becomes him, secondary functionaries and magistrates, the doctors and literary men will zealously acquit themselves of their duties in the seminaries; *so soon as he shall love and treat the people as his son, the people will be drawn to imitate its superior*; so soon as he shall have drawn about him all the savans and the artists, his wealth will be advantageously spent; so soon as he shall entertain agreeably the men who come from a distance, straightway will men from the four ends of the empire flock in crowds into his state, to receive part in his benefits; so soon as he shall treat with kindness his great vassals, straightway he will be respected throughout the whole empire."

Let it be granted that there is a certain crabbedness about this style of composition, still, with all its oddities, which cannot even be got rid of in a translation (and should not be), there is something in it of the genuine stamp. It is the utterance of a man who has the moral courage to tell what he knows; to teach that which he profoundly believes, and if statesmen of modern ages in China and in Europe would only dare to speak as plainly to the princes they serve as Confucius did, there would not be one tithe of the confusion and misery which are now so prevalent in the world. Upon one occasion he mourned over the fact that kings are deceived by their ministers, and this in language which shows the modern man amid the ancient people. He said, 'Such is the condition of kings in our day; they are deceived by those in whom they place most confidence. I console myself by thinking

'that no part of my conduct has provoked this disgrace, and that I can be useful in other places besides Choo.'

We close this paper with the few words of advice he gave to King Gag-Kung. 'Be just, be disinterested. Justice respects no one; it gives to all their due. Disinterestedness leads to equity; when we are biassed, we cease to be just. If we take anything from our inferiors, under whatever title, we commit a theft upon them. Four times a year, in each season, convene the people, and explain to them in person their duties. A few words from you will be a spur to their attention. Let them never want instruction, for how can they be chargeable with the neglect of what they do not understand?'

P. W. P.

CHARITY AND THE CLAIMS OF THE POOR.

A LECTURE BY THE EDITOR.

THERE are not many features more remarkable in the old soldier than the way in which, when fortune favours him with an attentive listener, he fights his battles over again. There was a period in his life when he cared not to dwell minutely upon the things he had done, and what he had witnessed in the fearful scenes through which, in comparative security, he had passed. That was when the colour of the blood remained fresh to his eye, when the smell of the death-sanding powder was yet in his nostrils, and the sound of artillery still rang in his ears. The events were all too horrible and recent to be spoken of with composure; and at that time the brave warrior sought rather to wipe them from his memory, than, by means of frequent repetition, to render their vividness more vivid.

I remember listening for a long time to the story of an old seaman—sitting beneath one of the trees in Greenwich Park, while he told of the battles through which he had passed. In refinement of mind and general intellectual power he was superior to his class. He became so much excited by the narrative, that, although having a wooden leg, he rose from his seat and went through a variety of motions, all of them aiding him in his narrative, which was remarkably clear. On my inquiring if he had always felt as much pleasure in telling his story, if, immediately after his return home, he was so ready to relate the painful part of his adventures, he answered, that he was not; and added, "Why, you know, it made me so sick-like to talk about it then, that I talked more about the places and men I had seen, than about the battles!" Time had toned down his perception of the horrors through which he had passed, had blotted many of the most revolting features from his memory; but had not impaired his powers of description in relation to the more stirring and less painful events. It was evident that, aided by the toning down, the farther he was removed, in time, from the scenes through which he had passed, the more pleasure he found in speaking of them.

In many particulars, that old man fairly represents society at large, which, as a rule, is careful in avoiding the discussion of great tragedies in their detail; and will not dwell upon the minuter features of any recent catastrophes. Ancient horrors it readily studies. No student complains of the minuteness with which Thucydides describes the plague of Athens; and it is marvellous with what composure some tender-hearted men can sit down and read the

histories of the plagues and famines which desolated Europe in the Middle Ages. But if in the hearing of those very men the cholera, or the Irish famine and pestilence, be named, they are utterly prostrated, and seem to be incapable of avoiding the manifestation of painful emotions. It may be, that they had witnessed some of the agonising scenes connected with those calamities—it may be, that their relatives or friends were swept away by them; and hence, their recall to the memory becomes painful. But even if it be so, it is a thing which must be done. Those events may have a meaning in them, and be rich in instruction, as I believe all of them to be. And such being the case, the claims of the future press themselves earnestly upon our attention. We must keep our faces courageously towards the facts in all their painful detail, until we have learned their deeper meaning, and the law of duty which they prescribe.

We, in this Metropolis, have recently sustained a great disaster, and the want and suffering through which so many fellow-citizens have passed, demand our attention. The winter has been remarkable, not more so for its intense cold, than for the revelation it has furnished of the actual condition of our working population. Many of our gay youths who had so anxiously desired to have a protracted and severe frost; so that, the rivers being bound up, they might glide with lightning speed over their surface, were filled with terror when they saw the cost-price of their enjoyment. To their honour be it spoken, thousands among them would have gladly surrendered all their skating pleasures, for this and for all future seasons, if by doing so, they could have purchased for the poor a perfect immunity from the repetition of such sufferings as those they were then enduring. Many of those unto whom I speak, saw some of the painful scenes presented at the Metropolitan Police Courts, when the starving crowds were collected together under the impression of there being a chance of obtaining enough, as a dole, to purchase the bread which would keep body and soul together: and, whoever saw them, will never forget those scenes. Thousands of human beings were there assembled, in the hope of obtaining even a small share of the bounty which the generous had placed at the disposal of the magistrates; and, only they who witnessed the eagerness of the crowd, can form any idea of what their hunger-pains must have been. As my object this evening demands it, I shall briefly recall some of the scenes to your memory.

It was one afternoon in January,* at three o'clock in the afternoon, that the large gates of the Thames Police Court were thrown open to permit the entrance of a crowd, which, for many hours, had been assembled on the outside. Fearful was the rush that instantly followed. By every one in that crowd the greatest anxiety was manifested to obtain, at least a sixpence, wherewith to purchase food for the wives and little ones who sat cold and hunger-smitten at home. Never in their experience, even in presence of an angry crowd, had the officers of the court a more difficult task than while they were engaged in admitting, and preventing injuries being sustained by, those who were present. So great was the rush that many had their clothes torn to shreds, and others were injured; though, happily, none seriously. All the officers performed their duty with that good humour and consideration that marks the conduct of the Englishman when in presence of sorrow and suffering. They led the expectant ones in batches of ten or twelve at a time to the usher's room, where, after being hastily questioned, they received a measure of relief. Mr. Livingstone performed his task kindly

* *Vide Times*, January 16.

and speedily, giving sixpence each to one hundred men; one shilling each to nine hundred; two shillings each to two hundred, and some few of them received half-a-crown. Then the means were exhausted. Two hundred women applied, but there was nothing for them; they were ordered to attend again on the following day, bringing letters of recommendation from persons who knew them, when their cases would be attended to. Thus, although put off, they had some hope for the morrow; but the hundreds of poor men who went away empty-handed had none to rely upon.

On the following day, according as the magistrate had desired, the women came. As early as noon above one thousand had assembled, the majority of whom were thinly and scantily clad; all were suffering under the oppression of cold and hunger; and, in many cases, so horribly does want pinch and contract the features, it was difficult to believe they were women who stood there. Until three o'clock they continued to stand in Arbour Street, which was completely blocked up, there being about two thousand at that hour; but the doors of the station were opened, and they gathered in the yard. During the day above one thousand recommendatory letters were sent in, all of which had to be examined. It was not until five o'clock that the relieving process began. By that hour the number of shivering creatures exceeded three thousand, and as long as the money lasted they were received in batches of twenty, but only about five hundred obtained what they sought—relief from one to five shillings each. All the others had to go penniless away, and, as the reporter adds, "the grief and anguish of those who could not obtain anything was really painful." *

And who marvels at their anguish, while remembering what weather it was, and that some of those "daughters of heaven" had been waiting in the piercing cold through more than six hours, hoping to obtain something for their children? But "poorly clothed," for many of them, days before, had sold or pawned articles of clothing in order to obtain a small supply of bread for their families; and thus had added to the pangs of hunger, the bitterness of not being shielded from cold. Who can pretend adequately to conceive what their sufferings were in all their intensity, physical, maternal, and mental? And they were not rough, strong men; hard as it is to gaze upon a group of three thousand hungry men, it may be borne; but these were women who were thus suffering and waiting. All of them had been pretty little smiling babes who were folded and fondled in a mother's arms with as deep affection and tenderness as the mightiest and purest Queen had fondled her little ones. They had grown up in mute wonder amid the marvels of creation and life; until, at length, the majority, with hearts full of hope, had wedded and hoped, had worked and striven their best—not always in the wisest way, more commonly the unwise, but still *their* best—to make the threads of life hold together. And, after all their hoping and striving, it had come to this—that they were to stand, or rather, for the sake of warmth, to be huddled together, only half-clad, outside a police-office door for hours waiting—too many of them only in the vain hope—to get enough to buy a little bread.

It was a sight to make the most stubborn doctrinaire yield a tear; it was a scene to melt the heart of the sternest. What the great spirits of England who now look down from their everlasting home upon the land for which they bled, could think of it, who shall say? With all the difficulties of the olden times, there never was anything like that. And apologise for it, or explain it, however men please, it will stand as a burning disgrace to England, that

* *Times*, January 17.

three thousand half-clad women had to wait outside a police-office door, through six hours, in one of the coldest winters ever known, to stand their chance of obtaining as much as would buy a quartern loaf of bread; and that above a thousand of them had to leave without getting the miserable supply.

We easily collect hundreds of thousands of pounds, from rich and poor, every year, in order to send missionaries and 'the Gospel to the heathen.' How much heathenism have we left untended at home! It would be impossible, in any savage land, to equal that scene, however ignorant and coarse the people might be. And did the heathen but know, in all its details, this story of the poor in London during the frost of 1860, when our missionaries reached the scene of their labour, they would be questioned in such a way, that their cheeks would burn with shame, and their tongues cleave to the roof of their mouths; especially when the savages bade them—as they certainly would do—return to humanise and improve the systems under which, in their native land, such a state of things had become possible. For the untutored child of nature would look only at the naked facts, and could not understand the methods by means of which civilised and religious men manage to account for such scenes so as to avoid self-reproach.

Some of the instances of individual suffering which were mentioned in the police-courts, were of the most appalling nature. Not desiring to harrow your feelings too acutely, I abstain from citing the worst cases, but must mention a few. Here is one. On a Monday in January, Edis, an officer of Worship-street, brought forward a journeyman shoemaker, whose case he had that morning inquired into. The man lived somewhere near Hackney, and on the previous day had written a letter to the worthy magistrate, in which he spoke of his 'wife and three children.' Now, however, he spoke only of the children, one of whom he expected to be dead before he reached home. Edis stated that 'when visiting the man he saw as distressing a scene as could well be witnessed. The family were all in one wretchedly-furnished room; the father was busy mending a shoe, being the first job he had had for some time past. There were two children, who were devouring some bread and coffee; and while on one side lay stretched the dead body of his wife, covered over with a sheet, on the other, on two chairs, by a mere handful of fire, lay a child, seemingly little more than a year old, gasping and struggling, and evidently in the agonies of death. He knew not the nature of its disease, but the parish doctor had given it up as hopeless. The wife had been ill eight months; she was consumptive. The parish, however, had agreed to bury her.'*

Thanks to the parish officials, they would at least bury their dead! But what of that child—what of that father? The "Song of the Shirt" touched all our hearts, but what if poor Hood had been living now to write the "Song of the Shoe?" Sitting down, mending a shoe! amid that wretchedness and misery. A dead wife, a dying child, and no outlook, in this God's universe, beyond the profit to be derived from mending that shoe! The stolid heroism of that man is not to be easily matched. I can personally pledge you that it was not indifference. And hence it has something about it of a fearful cast, which either indicates a dumbness of the speaking soul, or a power of self-possession not shared by many of his class. Let us hope that he will be able to banish its sadness and agony from his memory.

(To be continued.)

* The Times, Jan. 8.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF SOLOMON.

(Continued from p. 128.)

DOUBTLESS, however, some allowance must be made for the rudeness of the age, for we have no right to expect from Solomon the same refined feeling and sense of injustice which is displayed by modern men. We must estimate him according to the standard of his own age. In justice we must do so, but unhappily the old disturbing cause again comes into action. He is represented as being the hand of God; his nation is spoken of as being divinely led, and, consequently, in fairness we ought not to make any such allowances. Why should we condemn the heathen for their failings, when the Hebrew Monarch was not a whit their superior, and is actually compelled to shelter himself from condemnation beneath the shadow of their wings?

But to return to this wonderful dream at Gibeon: "And now, O Lord my God thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked for riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days. And Solomon awoke; and, behold, it was a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants."* Such is the "glorious history" that has won for this man so much praise; and which, even in our own "enlightened age," is viewed by many learned divines as a priceless fragment, which affords the one solitary example of man rising superior to wealth, and power, and luxury; the one redeeming instance of a mere human being loving wisdom above all else, and being prepared to abandon all things for the sake of wisdom: To them it appears that this choice was almost superhuman, and cannot fail to exalt Solomon in the eyes of all men who admire what is noblest and best in human conduct.

But what is all this praise and flattery beyond empty bombast and mere word-mongering, having no sure foundations? Did he really desire to be wise? Was he earnestly in love with knowledge? It says: "And Solomon awoke and found it was a dream." Were Solomon's dreams of higher value than the dreams of other men? Are we to praise him for choosing goodness in a dream? And who, in this nineteenth century of work and hope, of trial and agony, can pass off the virtuous resolves of his dreams as fair characteristics of his life? And what shall be said when the reality opposes the dreaming life, as in the case of Solomon? There seems to be something too absurd in this narrative, to justify serious discussion. But this was, as we are informed, a real appearance of God—how can any man know that? Were we to hear a voice in the air breathing words into our ears in tones supernatural, we might conclude that it was God who spake, and yet what man in modern times would believe it, or deny the chances that we were

* 1 Kings, iii. 7-15.

mistaken? If, then, we are likely to be mistaken in our waking moments, what of the sleeping hours? How could any one know the dream was anything above an ordinary dream? It is so obviously impossible, that I forbear all argument upon the point.

But even if we suppose that Solomon asked God for wisdom, it is not to be concluded that in his heart he prized it above all else! The mere asking for it, "in a dream," could not prove him to be superior to all those, who, like Socrates, laboured through life to attain it. Moreover it was no virtue. For why should he ask for power, who was already so powerful that no Eastern Monarch could equal him in this vaunted advantage? He did not ask for the gratification of luxurious tastes! be it so, but if the records are to be credited, there was nothing then known in the way of luxury which he could not command. And the latter point, so much boasted by critics, that he did not ask for wealth, is really contemptible, when fairly examined. If the Books of Kings and Chronicles are to be believed, then, as I shall show presently, wealth was a drug to Solomon. According to the accounts there given of the weight of gold and silver belonging to him, he must in riches have vastly surpassed all other of the ruling sovereigns of his time. And when a man has already possession of such surpassing wealth, surely it cannot be treated as a surprising virtue that he does not ask for more. That he asked for what he had not was very natural; but that he did not ask for what he already possessed in abundance should not be so loudly boasted of. Had he been powerless, and in poverty-stricken circumstances, and then, instead of asking either power or wealth, had asked for wisdom, we could readily join in honouring him for the virtue of his choice; but surely his greatest eulogist, in presence of the facts of his life, would not dare to say that had he been powerless and poor his choice had been the same. Why, then, the unbounded praise and honour? There is no satisfactory answer to be obtained; for, as this Bible examination shows us, the critics praise or blame by authority.

But Solomon deserves no great credit for his desire, even had he desired it in his waking moments, and with his whole heart—at least no credit above that which is due to other men who have not only "desired wisdom," but who have given their lives to achieve it. And when Dr. Kitto laboured in his article upon this point to establish the superiority of Solomon, saying, that he was the glorious exception, in desiring wisdom above power and wealth, he uttered that which is not merely false to history, but is also an insult to the memory of thousands. When we run our eyes over the biographies of poor scholars, who have lived in misery and laboured after wisdom in pain—men whose names are recorded in the history of all countries, we feel, that, in order to overpraise Solomon, the brave band of heroes, stretching from ages before Socrates down to the times of poor Keats, have been calumniated. These men sought after wisdom in defiance of loss, difficulty, and threatened death. How many of them wrought on in little chambers, trying to discover the secrets of nature by a patient exhaustion of all the processes they could conceive of, in order to render the oversight of truth impossible! Our sciences are nothing less than monuments sacred to the memory of that brave band who loved light rather than darkness, who loved truth above wealth, and who bartered away all the ordinary and dearly-prized happinesses of life in order to win, from out of the unknown, new truths wherewith to endow and bless mankind. Did Solomon ever exhibit anything of the spirit of patience and self-sacrifice exhibited by these workers? Is not his whole life of sensuality a proof that he would never have paid the price for wisdom that these men paid? And is not that the only fair test of the value a man places upon it? He desired wisdom. So do thousands, and if it could be obtained by praying Heaven to grant it, then Heaven would be besieged with petitions. This were an easy method, and all would be supplied. Many desire wisdom, but desire to have it without either labour or pain, and when they find that patience, perseverance, personal sacrifice, and continued labour are absolute conditions, preliminary to the search, which do not even ensure success, they grow faint, lose heart, and fall back into the world to tread the old paths as men who loved wisdom a little—loved it in theory, but not with such

heartily love as prompts to great sacrifices in order to win the prize. But the men who pay the price are worthy of all the honour we can bestow, and certainly we cannot consent to the injustice of defrauding these men of their due, in order to honour Solomon because he wished for wisdom, but never paid any price for its possession.

But entirely independent of the question of how far Solomon deserves to be praised for desiring wisdom, there is another equally important, and which is generally answered quite as falsely as that we have discussed. It is the question, Was he a wise man? We are told that his wisdom "excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East Countries, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men . . . and his fame was in all the nations round about"*. This is repeated in various forms, and it is stated that "there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom." The "all kings" must be understood in a modified sense, either as meaning many, or all the writer knew of, and his catalogue was not a long one. One illustration is given in order to exhibit the marvellous wisdom of this man. Two women came before him, each claiming to be the mother of a child which they had brought with them. There had been two children, but one died, and now both claimed the living one. How could the right be determined, seeing that there was no evidence to be called which could assist Solomon in his decision? He hit upon the following plan:—"And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the King answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof."† The author of the narrative appends the statement that all Israel heard of the judgment with which the king had judged, and feared him, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment. Probably they believed this acuteness in appealing to the laws of affection to be unexampled, but curiously enough, all nations have some similar tale to tell. The Romans related a story of the Emperor Claudius, that when a woman was before him who refused to recognise her own son, he ordered her to marry him, which naturally brought her to her senses, and made her confess the truth. Adam Clarke quotes the case of Ariopharnes, King of Thrace, who was appointed to judge between three young men who claimed to be sons of the deceased king of the Cimmerians, and of course desired to have the crown. He ordered them to shoot three arrows into the body of the dead king; two agreed, but the third would not mutilate the body of his parent.

This, as Dr. Clarke recognises, was an appeal similar to that in the case of Solomon; but, as I conceive, it indicated in some senses a deeper wisdom. It was an appeal to the affections which were not so powerful in relation to a son and his dead father, as in that of a mother and her living child. But probably it was less perfect as a test to be widely applied; for who is there unconscious of the fact of millions being to be found who would not hesitate a moment about doing as they were commanded. Thus, as the real sons would do so, the test of sonship becomes useless.

(To be continued.)

* 1 Kings, iv. 30-31.

† Ibid. iii. 24-27.

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CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

THE charitable institutions of London number above five hundred, and they enjoy an annual income which falls but little short of two millions a-year. Are they equal in value to their costs? Do they produce an equivalent measure of good? They certainly do not, and, speaking practically of their nature and work, it must be confessed they are either gigantic frauds, strange mistakes, or gross impertinences. Either they deliberately delude or defraud their victims, rich and poor—they who give and they who receive. Recent revelations have rendered it clear that, too commonly, their boards in various senses are sinks of iniquity, and models of bad administration. Not that the directors pocket the proceeds of benevolence; for such a degree of wrong they are unsuited, but they squander them—waste them in paying an useless staff of officials, and too readily allow those officials to plunder the funds without bringing the criminals to punishment when detected, “lest, peradventure, the “institution should suffer through the failure of public confidence;” or, more especially, because they will not run the risk of revealing to the world their own incompetency.

There is no calling, in modern times, which has a greater tendency to impair the delicate sense of truth than is that of acting as a paid collector for one of those institutions. Whoever undertakes to do it successfully must proceed systematically upon the path of misrepresentation. Not uttering distinct falsehoods, but abstaining from telling the whole truth. He must bolster up the cause of charity, by lending himself to flatter the prejudices, to extenuate the weaknesses, or to smile approvingly at the coarseness of those from whom he has to wring “the arrears of their annual subscription.” If they be pious persons, it is with an air of sanctity he must address them; if they be men of the world, then it is as a man of the clubs he must approach them. Are they mill-owners or retired city men? then the speech is framed upon the practical model; are they men seeking to obtain a name for being charitable? then he dwells upon the fact that, “our printed “list of subscribers is read by the most important persons in England.” The collector is always careful to find out “what kind of a man” he is about to visit. If he be a Tory, and the collector a Whig, he is at least careful to avoid political subjects. It is in the widest possible sense he reads the

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saying of Paul about being "all things to all men;" and he is the most successful in collecting who conforms to the rule of stifling his own feelings and convictions "in order to promote the cause of the charity."

Many who read the printed appeals so widely distributed, and placed as advertisements in the newspapers, are led to imagine, not only that the purest-minded, most generous, and self-sacrificing men are associated with the particular institution under notice, but also that the world cannot need much more for its reformation than the success of that particular charity. They are little aware of the care and business-tact with which the appeal was drawn up, or of the amusing reasons assigned for correcting the early draft into its present shape. The money-value of every sentence was duly estimated before being issued. As a bear licks her cubs into shape, so those appeals are gradually moulded into form. And, when ready, the great pride of their concoctors is that "they are sure to take." There is quite as much finesse displayed in preparing the charity circular, as in drawing up the address of a candidate to the electors of Drinklum; and the earnest desire to outdo the rival candidate is hidden with equal skilfulness, although it is felt with as great intensity. These appeals are never above one-half true—seldom so much. And still, in the main, they were good and well-intentioned men who approved of sending them out. The secretary is supposed "to know best," and thus the matter is allowed to be settled. But it is not so. Lying, even although done in the robes of virgin purity, is none the less "lying"; and while a lie cannot last, or be permanently successful, the liar must be damaged.

One painful feature of the system is its necessary tendency to deprave the officials, who, without intending it, are converted into practised hypocrites. There is a marvellous difference in their bearing towards the man who comes to pay his subscription, and the poor starveling who solicits aid. To the former they are toadies; but tyrants to the latter. Granted that there are noble exceptions—very many such; but their existence is to be attributed to an inherent goodness in the men, which the evils of the system could not subdue. The rule of conduct is as stated; which would not be so, were the men made up of kindness and Christian love, as the circulars lead the readers to imagine. But it is not wise to condemn them too severely. They also are victims of the system; for many a man who, when his connection with a charitable society was first established, had a heart as full of tenderness as that of the best, has become so accustomed to scenes of suffering that he treats them as mere ordinary matters, and is thoroughly incapacitated for manifesting those sympathies which the sick, or the poverty-stricken, stand so much in need of. Thus it is, that real charitable feeling is scarcely to be found the "charity office;" and such being the case, it is impossible to believe the system can be productive of the blessings desired by the subscribers.

As a rule, these institutions are great impediments to the progress of true principles of social life, while they only serve as poor apologies for charity. If a cry be heard about some particular form of distress, then, immediately, a knot of persons get together to draw up a touching appeal, and found a new charity. Some of them are busy men, some dullards; to these are added a few who wish to become important; and lastly, some honest-hearted good-meaning men—the latter, always in the minority—have joined solely because of their desire to remove the evil; but unhappily go the wrong way to work. They scheme a most elaborate charity-engine, from whence all sorts of blessings are to be poured forth. This machine, however, will not work by itself, so the "busy man" is appointed to act as secretary—at a

salary. His business is to keep the machine going; he must get a good supply of means; and when some poor wretch goes down upon his knees for relief, the official turns the handle of the machine, and grinds out a few drops of the peculiar sort of Charity the institution was established to afford. Thus, the Divine law of benevolence is done by machinery. Men compound with God, for not administering their own gifts, by sending their guineas to the charity Machine, to be ground out in dribblets to those who stand in need.

This miserable course of proceeding is spoken of as being charitably disposed—as being in conformity with the Divine Law. Most men are so busy looking after their worldly affairs, that they have no time “to attend to the call of want;” and hence they do it by deputy. But is it merely the given shilling the poor man needs in his hour of affliction? Is it merely so much coin, or a fixed modicum of bread, that we are called upon to present to those who are in want? If so, then, indeed, our charities are easily performed. There is, however, no truth in the theory; for the chief of that which we are bound to give is the priceless sympathy which, more than any money, operates as a charm upon the sick heart, and helps to unloose the fangs of disease. Kind words, cheering little speeches, brotherhood, sisterhood, and tenderness, these are they for which the heart of the diseased one pants; and happy are they who are just enough to themselves to supply them. The mere mechanical machine-grinder cannot give such gifts; it is his “business” to dispense charity, and, if he be a good man, he goes about his work in much the same style as the undertaker; if he be other than good, then the shillings he leaves behind seem to have a curse left with them, for they operate neither on the heart nor the physical frame. If men and women will obey the law of charity, they must make time, and find courage to be their own almoners. Between the business charity-monger and the sick heart there is a wall of coldness, which official reserve renders yet more enduring. They who are in distress cannot open their hearts to the salaried agent, because he has not come to them in love, but in his round of business. From this it follows that his advice is laughed at, and he is derided. But when a man becomes his own almoner, he usually carries his heart and human feelings with him, so that, if he have only a shilling to give, he can mix up such gentle words and tender sympathy with it as will render it of far more value to the heart of the receiver than gold is, when given from the cold, repulsive hand.

If only one-half the money now given for charitable purposes were thus dispensed, there is every reason for believing, not only that more than one-half the misery now endured would be extinguished, but likewise, that much of it would never be repeated. There is room enough for such action, and the good fruit is assured if men will but work as they feel it to be their duty to do. Neither does it matter how small be the amount the giver has to dispose of; the smaller it is, the greater is the necessity for preventing its being made less, through the cost of working a machine, before any portion of it can reach the hands of those for whom it was intended. If it be only sixpence which is given, the advice of the donor is freely listened to, because the poor one believes that it was from pure and unselfish motives that he came to them. This can never be the case with the official. The poor feel that his coming is not so much a matter of choice and good feeling as it is of business and policy, and while this impression remains, they cannot view him in any other light than one who lives upon charity. He may be single-minded, yet they cannot believe it; and while it is so, it is clearly impossible to use him successfully for the purposes of true charity.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—X.

THE HERETICS OF Languedoc.

MACAULAY, in adverting to the policy of the Church of Rome, once said, "She thoroughly understands, what no other Church has ever understood, how to deal with enthusiasts. In some sects—particularly in infant sects—enthusiasm is suffered to be rampant; in other sects—especially in sects long established and richly endowed—it is regarded with aversion. The Catholic Church neither submits to enthusiasm, nor proscribes it, but uses it." This broad statement, however, requires some qualification. The Church, truly, has frequently used enthusiasm, but frequently also proscribed it. Indeed, it was not until she saw that it might be sometimes profitably used that she tolerated it at all. A proof of this is found in the case of Peter Waldus. He and his followers were enthusiasts, as all first teachers of a truth have need to be; their aims were not to destroy but to reform the Church. Had the Church tolerated them, instead of making them strong by persecution, one of two results would have followed—their enthusiasm would have burnt itself out, or the Church would have been reformed from within, and thus have retained its power and authority longer than it did. But in this case the Church refused to tolerate. Peter had no desire, in the first instance, to stand forth as hostile to the Church, or to form a sect separate from it. We find, therefore, that some years after he commenced his itinerant preachings, he sent to Pope Alexander III. a copy of his Romance version of the Bible, soliciting his approbation for the same, and asking the Papal sanction for the "apostolical" societies to which we have already alluded. The Pope made the mistake of refusing the required sanction; and, moreover, issued an order forbidding Peter and his associates to read or expound the Scriptures. It was now, therefore, necessary for them to decide whether they would obey the Pope, and desist from their work, or pursue it, and separate themselves from the Church. They nobly chose the latter course, and their work was doubtless all the more effective because they were free.

The rapid and powerful effect of Peter's preaching, soon caused alarm on the part of the clergy. Within a year or two of the time at which he is supposed to have commenced his ministry, a Church Council held at Tours, published this decree: 'Whereas a damnable heresy has for some time lifted its head in the parts about Toulouse, and has already spread its infection through Gascony and other provinces, concealing itself like a serpent within its own folds; as soon as its followers shall have been discovered, let no man afford them a refuge on his estate; neither let there be any communication with them in buying and selling; so that being deprived of the solace of human conversation, they may be compelled to return from error to wisdom.' But from what we have seen of the spirit of freedom, and dislike to Church authority, we can easily understand how it was this decree failed of having any effect. To the chagrin of the Pope and the priesthood, Peter continued his labours for many years unmolested, and his followers continually grew in numbers and strength.

We have it on record that when a bishop asked one of the Provençal nobles why they did not expel the Waldenses from their province, and obey the wishes of the clergy, he answered, "We cannot do it, for we have grown up with them, and have kinsmen amongst them; besides we see

"them living in all honesty." Therein lay their strength, that they afforded so favourable a contrast with the priests of the Church; and when, as we shall see, the new movement, thus begun, branched off into other and wilder heresies, we should never lose sight of the fact, that it rested itself originally on a reasonable and moral basis. And that the people felt this, is proved by a Troubadour poem of that time, still extant, called *La Nobla Leyezon*, in which the poet says, "He that will not swear, or speak evil, or lie, or commit injustice and theft, or give himself up to dissoluteness, or take vengeance on his enemies, is called Vaudois (or Waldensian), and the cry is, 'Death to him!'"

But although unsuccessful as regards the heresy, the Pope appears, with the aid of the priesthood, to have had sufficient power to drive Peter Waldus out of Languedoc. The hatred of the priests followed him into Dauphiny, Picardy, and Germany. A fugitive for many years before his death, he found his final resting-place among the Bohemian mountains, where he died in the year 1180. But though dead in the flesh he was not dead in the spirit; his work lived after him, producing various fruit. In the very mountains where he died, a John Huss in after ages preached the same purity of life, and carried to wider issues much that had been taught by Peter; while in Languedoc and the entire South of France, the work of Peter continued to bear fruit long after his death.

Numerous sects sprang up, and soon became thickly spread throughout the provinces of Alby, Carcassonne, Laurac, and Beziers, as far as Bordeaux. "By mere chance," says Neander, "the sects scattered in South France received the common name of Albigenses, from one of the districts, where the agents of the Church who came to combat them found them mostly to abound,—the district around the town of Alba or Alby; and by this common name they were known until the commencement of the thirteenth century. Under this general denomination, parties of different tenets were comprehended together, but the Catharists seem to have constituted a predominant element among the people thus designated."* It is therefore necessary to recollect that in speaking of Albigenses, we do not speak of Peter's followers only; but of many sects, professing tenets dissimilar and often opposed to each other, which had arisen by reason of the movement of which Peter was the most prominent exponent, and whom, as heretics, the Church hated with an indiscriminating hate. So early as the year 1198, Innocent III., the reigning Pope, sent into Languedoc two legates, to inquire as to these various sects, with orders "to endeavour to convince them by argument of their errors, and in case they did not succeed in this way to pronounce the ban upon them." After that a more numerous commission, consisting of a body of monks, were sent in the hope of intimidating the heretics, by ban and interdict, into submission to the Church. For seven years these Papal agents continued to threaten and preach throughout this district but with very little success, for they were worsted in argument, and their threats were treated with contempt.

We have an account left us by one of the monks engaged in this preaching and banning commission, of the nature of the sects which had thus sprung up in Languedoc. It is very curious, as showing the strange and diversified opinions of the sectaries. Let us remark, however, that the picture thus drawn is from the hand of an enemy, and, therefore, there is little doubt, overdrawn and distorted. It is as follows:—In the first place, we must premise that

* Church Hist. viii. p. 400.

'the heretics recognized two Creators; the one, the Creator of things invisible,
 'whom they called the good God; the other, the maker of the visible world,
 'whom they called the wicked God. To the first they attributed the New
 'Testament, to the second, the Old; which they wholly rejected, with the
 'exception of some passages quoted from it into the New, and which they
 'received through their respect for the latter. They said that the author of
 'the Old Testament was a liar, because it is said in the book of Genesis—But
 'of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in
 'the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;—and yet, they argued,
 'after eating they did not die. They also treated him as a homicide for having
 'reduced to ashes the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, and destroyed
 'the world by the waters of the deluge, and for having buried under the sea
 'Pharaoh and the Egyptians. They believed all the patriarchs of the Old
 'Testament to be damned, and ranked St. John the Baptist as one of the
 'great devils. They said, moreover, that the good God had two wives, Colla
 'and Coliba, and that he begat sons and daughters. Other heretics said that
 'there was only one Creator, but that he had two sons, Christ and the devil.
 'They said, too, that all creatures were originally good, but that they had
 'been corrupted by the woman, mentioned in the Revelation. All these un-
 'believers, members of Antichrist, first-born of Satan, seeds of sin, children
 'of crime, with their hypocritical tongues, and seducing by lies the hearts of
 'the simple, had infected by the poison of their perfidy the whole province
 'of Narbonne. They said that the Roman Church was little else than a den
 'of thieves, and was that harlot spoken of in the Revelation. They did
 'away with the sacraments of the Church, so far as to teach publicly that the
 'water consecrated for baptism is just the same as any other water, and that
 'the host of the most blessed body of Christ is nothing more than common
 'bread; insinuating in the ears of the simple the horrid blasphemy, that
 'Christ's body, were it the size of the Alps, would long since have been
 'consumed and reduced to nothing by the numbers that had eaten of it.
 'Confirmation and confession they deemed follies, and holy matrimony prostitu-
 'tion; and believed that none could be saved who wedded and begat sons
 'and daughters. Denying the resurrection of the flesh, they forged I know
 'not what unheard-of fables, saying, that our souls are those angelic spirits
 'which, precipitated from heaven for their presumptuous apostacy, left their
 'glorious bodies in the air, and that after these souls have successively passed
 'through seven different bodies upon earth, they return, this expiation
 'ended, to resume their former bodies. There were, too, other heretics,
 'named Vaudois, after one Valdis, or Waldus, of Lyons. They were bad,
 'but much less so than the rest; for they agreed with us in many things, and
 'only differed in a few. To pass over the greater number of their heresies,
 'their chief errors lay in four peculiarities—in their wearing sandals after the
 'manner of the apostles; in asserting that taking an oath, or shedding man's
 'blood, was on no account permissible; and, especially in maintaining that
 'the earliest arriver, in case of need, might consecrate the body of Jesus
 'Christ, provided he wore sandals, even had he not been ordained by the
 'bishop.

But shall we marvel at the strangeness of the opinions which had thus
 sprung up? For hundreds of years doctrinal discussion had been silenced in
 the Church, and now that the human mind (in Languedoc at least) had woken
 to a sense of its right to freedom, it revelled in it, and reason ran riot. Nor is it
 any wonder that many of the forms, taken by the new liberty of thought ex-

istent amongst men just escaped from mental slavery, should be fantastic or even repulsive in their aspects. It is ever so; the slave suddenly, enfranchised, commits all kinds of folly in the first transports of his unwonted freedom. History teems with evidences of the strange vagaries of men under a reaction from a state in which they had been mentally or physically, or otherwise enthralled. Newly-recovered liberty easily runs into license, and in the sphere of religion, man has ever been led, in times of re-action and revolution, he has hardly known whither and cared as little; we are therefore not disposed to doubt the substantial accuracy of the foregoing account, but to see in it only a proof of the depth of the impulses which moved men in this their insurrection against the Spiritual Despotism, which had oppressed them so long. The eloquence of the Pope's missionaries availed nought against the impulse which had stirred the people of Languedoc. Their preaching was met with derision; nor were their persons safe from the violence of the populace. And the Church looked on with dismay at the fact, that a whole nation was prepared to throw off her yoke.

JAS. L. GOODING.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS).

§ 10.—DISCOURSES ON HUMAN NATURE AND RELIGION.

AMONG the various reported discourses of Confucius, there are several which demand especial attention, not alone because they shew how closely he had viewed the human character, but also for their profound wisdom. The following may be taken as a fair specimen of the most lengthy, and as it illustrates what is still, in theory, the 'measure of men,' in China, we give it entire, as a discourse "On the five classes of men found in society."

"The first and most numerous," said he, "is that which comprehends men of all conditions, distinguished by no particular quality, who speak only for speaking sake, without considering what they say; who act as it were by instinct, doing to-day just what they did yesterday, and for no other reason than because they have done it before; who do nothing spontaneously, but passively allow themselves to be led by others; whose narrow intellect is incapable of embracing a large view of human affairs, but whose dexterity in little things enables them to extract a paltry gain from their fellows; whose understanding is governed solely by the organs of sense, and extends not beyond the eyes, the ears, and the mouth: this class consists of those who are commonly called the 'people.'"

"The second includes those who have been trained in science, letters, and the liberal arts; who propose to themselves a certain end, and are capable of calculating the means of attaining it; who, without having penetrated to the depth of things, know enough to be qualified to teach others; who can give a reason for whatever they say or do; who can compare ideas, and discern the good and bad; who, though not deeply conversant with the principles of laws and customs, are capable of conforming to general rules and received usages; who, knowing much, are yet not ignorant that there remains much to know; whose lectures and examples correct public manners and influence government itself; who study to speak well rather than much, and prefer doing a little rightly than to undertake a great deal; who, neither coveting riches nor dreading poverty, are content with their present lot: these may be termed the 'lettered' class.

"The third consists of those who, in all their words and actions, never depart from the rules of right reason; who do good for its own sake; who plunge into no excess, nor addict themselves eagerly to any object; who are the same in prosperity and in adversity; who speak when they ought to speak, and are silent when silence is best, having sufficient firmness to give utterance to their real sentiments whenever the occasion demands, though it should cost them fortune or even life; who regard all mankind in almost an equal light, as having the seeds of the same vices and the same virtues; not esteeming themselves above others, since there is no one by whom they may not be excelled in what is good, or to whose level they might not sink in what is vicious; who are not content to study the ordinary vehicles of science, but pursue knowledge into its remotest sources, in order to obtain it in purity, at the same time, neither dejected at the failure of such pursuit, nor elated at its success: such as these may be decorated with the name of 'philosophers.'

"In the fourth class I place those who, in whatever happens, contemplate the *just mean*; who have one fixed rule of action and of morals, which they on no account transgress; who fulfil their obligations to the minutest point, with scrupulous exactitude and untiring perseverance; whose energies are directed to the control and subjection of their passions; who are ever vigilant to extinguish the seeds of vice in their own hearts; whose every word is measured and adapted to instruction, and whose every action is intrinsically good and fitted for example; who despise toil and anxiety, when the object in view is to recal men to their duty, to enlighten the ignorant, and to serve all who are dependant upon them, without distinction of rank or fortune, and without regard to interest, not exacting from those they serve even the sentiment of barren gratitude: these are 'the sincere and truly virtuous men.'

"The fifth class, the highest which human merit can attain, consists of those extraordinary men, who combine the rarest qualities of heart and mind, with the habit of pleasurably discharging all the duties which nature and morality impose upon a reasonable and social being; who do good to all, and, like the heavens and the earth, never discontinue their beneficence; who are as imperturbable in their mortal career as the sun and moon in their course; who see without being seen, and who act like spirits, as it were invisibly: the very few who answer this description may be called the class of 'perfect men,' or 'saints' (*shing*)."*

Comment upon this would be utterly out of place; although, as upon the discourses of Jesus, much might be written. But he who can appreciate noble thoughts, and a fine discrimination of character, needs only to read this discourse a few times, when all its force and deep meanings will be thoroughly appreciated.

At the close of this passage the philosopher speaks of 'spirits,'—did he believe in their existence? Nothing is more common among the orthodox than are speeches upon the Atheism of the Chinese teacher. Several authors have very distinctly declared that he did not believe in the existence of a Deity, or in the Immortality of the Soul; but if words have any meaning, then undoubtedly he taught these truths. Upon one occasion his disciple Tsze-kung asked a question, which involved a very curious point in psychology. He said he had scrupulously paid homage to his ancestors, but a doubt had often crossed his mind, whether they were conscious of what he did. 'Do they

* Asiatic Journal, vol. i. pp. 252-4.

see me? Do they hear me? Do they know what I do?' said he. 'I have often wished to learn your opinion upon the subject. A word from you will remove my doubts.'

'It is not necessary,' replied Confucius, 'that I should speak explicitly on this point. If I were to say that our ancestors are conscious of the honours we pay them; that they see, hear, and know what passes on the earth, it is to be feared that they, who cherish a deep sense of filial piety, would neglect their own lives, for the sake of rejoining in the other world those whom they loved in this; and, on the contrary, were I to say that all knowledge of the living ceases with life, it would encourage a neglect of filial duties, and dissolve those sacred ties which bind the human race in social happiness. Continue, therefore, my dear Tsze-kung, to fulfil, as you have hitherto done, your duties to your progenitors; conduct yourself as if you knew them to be witnesses of your actions, and seek to know no more: *the time will come when you will know all.*' *

There cannot be a doubt of his meaning in the closing sentence. If a time was to come when he 'would know all,' that involved a personal consciousness after life's fever had ended, and consequently he conceived of a life beyond the present, although he had the modesty and courage to be silent about its nature. That silence has been construed into denial; but how unjustly, all must feel who have endeavoured to learn more of the matter than he could tell.

In one of his discussions with the king, his majesty said it had been observed by one of the ancient sages, that man was distinguished from all other visible beings by the intellectual faculty, which rendered him capable of reasoning, and that he received that precious faculty directly from heaven; and he asked, "Do we not then receive our being wholly from our parents, like other creatures?"

The answer of the philosopher was to the following effect: "A portion of our parents' substance forms the basis of our existence, which would remain in an inert and inanimate state, but for the *yin* and *yang* (male and female) of nature, which, acting reciprocally upon this inert matter, gradually develop, extend, combine, and give it form: it then becomes a living being. But this living being is not man; it does not become man until its union with the intellectual quality, which is imparted to it by heaven, to adapt it to comprehend, to compare, to judge. So long as this being, thus animated and endowed with intelligence, can supply means of combination to the *yin* and the *yang*, for the development, extension, increase, and perfection of its form, it enjoys life; as soon as these agents cease to combine, it ceases to live. It reached the plenitude of life but by degrees and by expansion; it attains the term of destruction but by degrees and by decay. 'This destruction, however, is not annihilation; it is a decomposition, which restores each substance to its natural state. *The intellectual part mounts again to the heavens, whence it came; the ke, or breath of life, mixes with the aerial fluid; and the moist and dry particles become earth and water.*' "†

In the latter part of this, there is much which we could claim as modern thought expressed in a scientific form; for it is greatly superior in its clearness to the majority of ancient passages upon the same subject.

As farther illustrating, this subject and exhibiting the views of Confucius, we subjoin a passage upon the T'ien.

"The T'ien," said he, "is the universal principle and prolific source of all

* Asiatic Journal, vol. i. p. 254.

† Ibid. 256.

things. Our ancestors, who sprung from this source, are themselves the source of succeeding generations. The first duty of mankind is, gratitude to heaven; the second, gratitude to those from whom we sprung. It was to inculcate, at the same time, this double obligation, that Fuh-he established the rites in honor of heaven and of ancestors, requiring that, immediately after sacrificing to the Shang-te, homage should be rendered to our progenitors. But as neither the one nor the other was visible by the bodily organs, he sought emblems of them in the material heavens. The Shang-te as represented under the general emblem of the visible firmament, as well as under the particular symbols of the sun, the moon, and the earth, because by their means we enjoy the gifts of the Shang-te. The sun is the source of life and light; the moon illuminates the world by night. By observing the course of these luminaries, mankind are enabled to distinguish times and seasons. The ancients, with the view of connecting the act with its object, when they established the practice of sacrificing to the Shang-te, fixed the day of the winter solstice, because the sun, after having passed through the twelve palaces assigned apparently by the Shang-te as its annual residence, began its career anew, to distribute blessings throughout the earth. After evincing, in some measure, their obligations to the Shang-te, to whom, as the universal principle of existence, they owe life and all that sustains it, the hearts of the sacrificers turned, with a natural impulse, towards those by whom the life they enjoyed had been successively transmitted to them; and they founded a ceremonial of respect to their honour, as the complement of the solemn worship due to the Shang-te. The Chow princes have added another rite, a sacrifice to the Shang-te in the spring season, to render thanks to Him for the fruits of the earth, and to implore Him to preserve them." After describing various existing forms of sacrifice, he continued: "Thus under whatever denomination our worship be paid, whatever be the apparent object, and of what kind soever its external forms, it is invariably the Shang-te to whom it is addressed; the Shang-te is the direct and chief object of our veneration."*

P. W. P.

CHARITY AND THE CLAIMS OF THE POOR.

A LECTURE BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from p. 141.)

IN the same court, some days after, Brown, the warrant-officer, introduced to the notice of Mr. Leigh, among numerous others, three cases, the substance of which was as follows:—There was a representative of each family, the first being a wretched-looking woman, aged 40. Her name was Shields; and Brown, who had visited the place, said that he found a man, his wife, and three children; the man, who was a labourer, had been out of work nine weeks; their home was in a shocking condition, next to no bed clothing, no food visible, and all manifestly in a state of starvation. 'One of the children was lying with scarlet fever, and two more died of fever last week, and were buried by the parish on Saturday.'

What was the meaning of that fever? Was it the protest of nature against want? Not a medical man in England would say any other than, that of those children who perished of fever, by far the largest portion should be charged to the cause of want?

The name of the second family was Arnold; there were the man, a

* Asiatic Journal, p. 137.

labourer, his wife, and two children; the woman had been just confined of the second child, and 'was lying on the floor; *her bed consisted of some hay wrapped up in a piece of calico*; there was next to no covering, and all the food he saw was a piece of dry toast, and a small quantity of tea in a mug.' The third was a poor woman named Waggett. Her husband abandoned her and her four children, some time ago, and she had till lately tried to get a starving existence by making little articles of coloured beads. 'They were in as bad a state of destitution as they could possibly be; a small piece of candle was stuck in some putty on the mantleshef; there was one old chair, but no bed or bedstead, or table or washstand; they had nothing but the rags they wore in the daytime to cover them at night; they slept on the floor, and, in fact, were bereft of everything.*

On the following day, Inspector Armstrong waited upon Mr. Leigh, accompanied by a woman, and said, that, while passing through Thomas-street, Spitalfields, the preceding day, he was accosted by two people, who asked him to go up to the top front room of one of the houses. He consented to do so, and on getting up to the room, he found a man and his wife, evidently in a state of dangerous illness, stretched upon what they might use as a bed, but which was only a wretched substitute for one, and had no blankets, or any decent covering. The woman with him, who was the man's mother, stated the age of each to be 28, but they were so thin and ghostlike they looked much older. They both had consumption, were both evidently sinking fast, and had to be continually shifted and raised to enable them to breathe. The man, a cabinet-maker, but long without work, had been in the London Hospital for seven weeks, and was discharged about a fortnight before, as incurable, when the son of Inspector Constable, who knew something of the family, was so distressed at their misery, that he gave them ten shillings out of his own pocket, and that was all they had had to subsist upon ever since. When he (Mr. Armstrong) went in, there was no appearance of either fire or food, the place was wretched in the extreme, had scarcely anything in the shape of furniture, and was bereft of everything that could conduce to either warmth or comfort. They had one child, four years old, but, as neither its father nor mother could provide for or look after it, the husband's mother had been obliged to take it, though her own husband was only a labourer in the docks, where work was then very scarce.

There is, it must be confessed, a kind of folly in reciting these cases, because it is utterly impossible to do justice either to their nature or number? They are but poor samples of the suffering; and all who read the reports which appeared in the various newspapers, will bear me out in saying, that the instances I have selected fall below, rather than fairly represent, the fearful nature of the chief cases of destitution.

And what of the cases which were publicly made known? Does any man imagine that the whole circle of suffering was paraded in the streets—that what was seen, fairly represented the amount endured? Did all they who were in want come forth to show themselves, so that it can be supposed, when we have counted their number, we know precisely how many were in difficulties? I believe it will be far nearer the truth if we conclude that it was only a tithe of those who were in want who thus came before the public. Thousands of men, of whom we heard nothing, contracted little debts, and sold their clothing and furniture to procure food, but did not cry aloud at the corners of the streets about what they had to endure. Of some such I

* *Times* report, Jan. 16.

speak from personal inquiry, and it may be presumed that nearly all who compose this vast audience are able to speak, from their own knowledge, of similar instances. Thus what we saw of the crowds grouped around the police-courts, gathered near the houses of refuge, or in other public places, only symbolised the evil, but did not reveal its immense proportions. The safe conclusion will be that three times their number were sitting quietly in misery at home, or wandering through the streets without hope, and without venturing to ask for assistance, even when they knew where a little bread was to be obtained.

It follows, then, that we have no due conception of the aggregate amount of suffering. All we can have is the horrible consciousness that, in this religious and free country, the richest country in the world, there has been a most fearful measure of destitution, and that, directly or indirectly, an immense number of human beings have literally perished through wanting the common necessities of life. And what makes this more remarkable is the fact that, during the same period, there was no such suffering endured by the lower animals. The bounds of the hunter were as sleek as ever, for they were regularly supplied with provisions as before. It did not appear to them that there was anything particularly trying in the season. It was colder, but they were supplied with an extra allowance of food to meet the heat-producing requirements of their bodies, and therefore they had nothing extra to endure; they were not taxed by Nature beyond the powers of resistance with which they had been furnished.

The horses of the brewers and nobles, too, were quite as sleek as formerly. They were littered down with greater care, because the cold of the season was so severe. Their racks were full of hay, their mangers ran over with corn; and, in fact, although many of them were unable to earn their masters a single penny, their wants were supplied and their comfort attended to precisely the same as upon all other occasions. It was curious to see the difference between how the man and the horse were treated. The former could not work; and, as in these days of progress, money is held to be the great nexus between man and man—there being no labour done, there could be no wages paid. It was not so, however, with the horse with which the starving man had worked. True, indeed, that he could not work; but it was true, also, that he had to be fed; for, if starved, the "society" which labours to "prevent cruelty to animals" would have summoned the owner to answer for his brutality in not properly feeding the horse. Had he answered, by way of defence, that "the horse could not work, owing to the cold weather; therefore, he was not bound and could not afford to feed him," the defence would have been received with a general howl of indignation; but when the same answer is given in relation to a man, it is looked upon as quite reasonable and proper—so that a man may be left to starve, a horse not.

Doubtless the cases are not quite equal. Learned and able men can show, according to the institutions of society, the laws of capital, the gauge of wages, and so forth, that there is a great and marvellous difference between the two. They are right, but not, in their inference, upon the right side. There is a difference, but like the Englishman who fought at Culloden, they have mistaken the cause of the horse for that of the man. Moreover—and it will be fatal unto us if we ignore the fact—there are certain deeper laws of this universe which none can safely repudiate or violate; and, when estimated by those laws, what doctrinaire can say, such treatment of men, as being creatures less to be cared for than horses, will be justified? It is the fact that, during this

fearful season, the dogs and cats, even the common reptiles, have been supplied with their provisions; it was the human being alone who had to starve; and either we must abandon our theory, that he is the crown and king of creation, or pursue such courses as will give him the means of preserving himself from the miserable death which cometh of hunger, and which the lower animals have no occasion to dread.

But, 'having got through the difficulty, why not let it rest?' Why stir amid the ashes of misery, and be diligent in reviewing disasters? The thaw arrived, labour was resumed, and they who sat in want sit so no longer; wherefore, then, asks the sluggard, should we look too closely into this horrible agony? It is the doctrine of fools, that during the sunshine men should sit still to enjoy it. Better, as men, repair their dwelling before winter comes, employ the hours to create the means of being warmed and clothed when the sun does not shine. But say that we let this matter rest, that we spread a mantle of oblivion over it, shall we thereby destroy its sources? Do we blot out calamities by covering them up, as monkeys think to extinguish a fire when they throw up the ashes? If we leave this destitution alone—will it return the compliment and leave us alone? Will it never return? Have we seen the last winter of want and suffering. What will our recent experience say to this? Does misery in this Metropolis increase or diminish? Three years ago we were in a sad condition—the poor were lying houseless, and horrible narratives were published, of how hundreds, even thousands, slept all night upon pavements in the open air. The story brought its usual fruit, 'plenty of money,' and the Refuges for the Destitute were enlarged; but what was done beyond giving the miserable a shelter? In what way did we try to extinguish the sources of misery?

The fact is, that the number of the destitute increases, and what would be the consequence, were the severe frost to return, so that up to the end of March no out-door labour could be carried on? It has been so, over and over again—what if it were repeated? Our ancestors boasted of their fine bracing winters, and we have all sulked and pouted more than enough because they seemed to be quitting us. Be not deceived, for they have not abandoned us. The seasons, like all else, move in cycles. They, too, are subject to definite laws. The ignorant man imagines them to be perfectly unfettered, and thus, that cold or dry, warm or moist seasons are so purely accidental, that their character depends upon ephemeral causes. All this is as alien to the truth, as it is to the analogy of Nature in all other matters. It was a beautiful saying of Jesus, that 'the very hairs of our heads are numbered.' Nothing is left to blind chance, neither are all things governed by conscious fate. The freeman has power to act, but not to alter the natural consequences of his action. In Nature, however, there is not the same degree of liberty. Law rules with inflexible force in that circle; and because of that, we know our old winters will be with us again. Those frosts which lasted fifteen weeks will be 'enjoyed,' as I hope, by many now in this hall. But whether enjoyed or feared, they will be here again, and how are we preparing to meet them?

When the cry of misery is heard, we may be sure there is somewhat to amend. That man shall be steeped in misery is not according to God's laws. But frequently he is plunged into misery as the only way in which he can be forced into endeavouring to discover what those laws are. Pain is to the wise the stimulant to get wisdom. Had humanity never suffered much, it would never have learnt much. What was the famine in Ireland—the cholera

in Europe? Did they not preach the doctrines of labour, justice, cleanliness, and the duties of property? Through many centuries men had gone on counting annually the number of those who were slain of typhus and other fevers; scientific men bade them cleanse and drain the cities, but they heeded not, and would not have done so, had not a more formidable preacher called Cholera appeared. His sermons were full of wisdom attested by death; men became alarmed; they would drain and do anything if the preacher would go. Then, when he was gone, they said, "Oh, he will not return; let us save our money, why spend it in drainage?" Foolish mortals to imagine they could safely ignore the everlasting law! The preacher did return, and finding it was useless to resist, the drainage of our cities has been improved; for which we are rewarded by the absence of typhus and the other fevers. It was hard to persuade men of there being a meaning, a lesson on Hygiene in the calamity, but it was so, nevertheless. And it is so with our recent calamity. A lesson lies in it, and if we will not learn, will not obey, why, then, there will be nothing for it but the annual increase of helpless destitution; the frequent outburst of hunger fevers, and in place of our capital city being known all over the world as the largest and richest, it will be spoken of as the mighty city, wherein more persons annually die of starvation than in any other city of Europe, or than die from the same cause in all the uncivilised parts of the world.

P. W. P.

(To be continued.)

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF SOLOMON.

(Continued from p. 144.)

THE Hindus are proud of having similar instances to relate. The following may be taken as an example.

"A rich man had married two wives; the first of whom, although ugly, had a great advantage over the second, in that she had brought her husband a son, while the other was childless. But, as if to compensate for her sterility, the second wife possessed such charms of person and character, that she reigned supremely in the heart of her husband. Provoked at this preference, the first wife concocted a plan of vengeance equally astounding for its diabolical ingenuity and its savageness. She lavished every external mark of maternal love and tenderness upon the infant at her breast, and let the neighbourhood know that this child was now her only comfort, the centre of her hopes, in the absence of that affection which her husband denied her. As soon as she had convinced the world that her heart was altogether wrapt up in her little son, she, one night, when the husband was away from home, twisted the child's neck, and laid the corpse beside the second wife, who lay asleep in her bed. In the morning, pretending to seek for her infant, she ran into the chamber of her rival, and there finding the child dead, she fell upon the ground, tore her hair, and gave vent to the most frightful howls and lamentations. This brought the neighbours together; and the other wife was already condemned in their eyes; for it was clear the child had been murdered, and it could not cross their minds that any mother—and, least of all, a mother so fond as this—should thus destroy her own infant, whom she had held up as the only comfort left to her in life. This, however, was what the other urged in her defence—dwelling upon the enmity which the mother entertained against her, and maintaining that no passion was so cruel and relentless as jealousy. The case was brought before Mariadramen; and a day was appointed for each woman to plead her cause.

They did so, with that natural eloquence which passion usually inspires. The king, unable to decide upon the statements before him, pronounced this sentence: Let the woman who is innocent, and who pretends that her rival is culpable, move through this assembly in the posture which he would show her. The posture he indicated was one from which modesty would shrink. But the mother of the child with much vehemence declared that, in order to convince the assembly that her rival was guilty, she would not only take this turn through the assembly once, but a hundred times if required. The other sorrowfully declined the test, declaring that, although innocent, she would sooner submit to the most cruel death than do what was then required of her. The mother of the child was about to reply; but the voice of the king stilled all other sounds. He pronounced her guilty, and her antagonist innocent. 'A woman,' he said, 'whom the prospect of certain death cannot constrain to an unbecoming action, is incapable of so great a crime; but a female who, having lost all sense of womanly reserve, hesitates not at an immodest action, sufficiently declares herself to be capable of the blackest crimes.' Confounded to find herself thus discovered, the mother of the child vindicated the penetration of the royal judge, by publicly acknowledging her crime."

These cases bear a family-likeness, both in their acuteness and weakness, for in none of the cases is there the certainty of justice having been done. There are persons in the world who would be ready to see their little ones slain, rather than lose the cause in hand; rather than have them handed over to be held as the children of others; or rather than be compelled to resign a blessing into the hands of another. So, also, there are plenty who would abandon such a cause, and would cry, Give her the child, without being its parent. It does not need that a woman should be the mother of a child, in order to cause her to prevent its being slain.

Solomon, however, is famed and praised all over Christendom for building the Temple of Jerusalem, quite as much as for his 'wonderful wisdom.' The theory seems to be that he was chosen by the Most High to build the sacred palace; and that, having been properly instructed by his father, David, with regard to the nature of the work and the details, he commenced and carried the building to a more successful issue than attaches to the run of public edifices—an issue unsurpassed by any other building. This temple, built by Solomon, and said to have been "consecrated by God" Himself, has excited a considerable degree of wonder throughout the Christian world; and, doubtless, while it is spoken of in the vague and general terms usually and prudently employed by our divines, it will continue to excite the same measure of astonishment. There is a veil of foregone conclusion, a mist of supposed knowledge, through which men are invited to look at the edifice; but on no account must we approach it with line, rule, and pencil—that would be to indicate doubt or presumption. Stand afar off and look through the Sunday School magnifying glasses, and all will be well; but we must be especially careful not to go near to measure and estimate. The rule and the pencil are alike fatal to the Temple memory. Idealise as much as you please, but not measure, for when the rule and line have been brought to bear it is no longer possible to repeat the old ideas, without being perfectly conscious of uttering untruths. The dimensions, as they are set forth in the Bible, are quite opposed to the popular ideas; but even they are subject to curtailment. And indeed it has been questioned by many critics if the history of the Temple can be in any sense relied upon. That history is given in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, and it is requisite to learn when they were written. The Book of Kings was not written until the time of the captivity in Babylon, which was nearly 600 B.C., or 400 years after the death of Solomon. The Book of Chronicles was not written until the time of Ezra, at the close of the captivity five hundred and fifty years after Solomon. I say that these books were not written before then, and the obvious proof is seen in the fact, that they contain the records of the captivity. Of course it is within the range of possibility, that some man may suggest that each part was written immediately after the events recorded, and that thus the first part was penned

many years before the last. Of course, none but a man wholly ignorant of the language would say this, for, as all scholars are aware, the style of "Kings" and "Chronicles" differs very widely; but both books have an unity which is unmistakable, so that we must take them to be the work, not of many writers in succession, but of individuals whose peculiarities, both of thought and style, are visible from beginning to end. Hence it must follow that the only data supplied for the history of the temple does not stand in a nearer connection than 550 years. We thus have no history but that which was written more than five hundred years after the event, and is, consequently, to be viewed with suspicion. I say that it must be viewed with suspicion, but only to the same extent we should view with suspicion the extraordinary accounts furnished by any other nation of similar occurrences. It is very natural, as history amply testifies, for man, when in adversity, to over-paint the glories of his day of prosperity. Looking into the past, all is magnified, and in some degree we compensate for present sorrow by magnifying our past pleasures. The Jews were only just escaped out of captivity when the accounts were written which we now possess; though not captives now, they had gone up to the desolated city out of their captivity, under Ezra and Nehemiah, and under such circumstances it was natural for them to see glories in the Temple of Solomon which, in truth, had never existed. But the matter is taken entirely out of the abstract; and is rendered certain by the abundant contradictions connected with the frequent pillaging and the sacred vessels.

For instance, according to the history in Kings and Chronicles, this temple was plundered no less than six times. Shishak, the King of Egypt, is reported as having come up against Jerusalem to seize and plunder, and his raid was successful.* It is probable, if any such temple existed, that Shishak destroyed by fire that which he had captured. In the following chapters, accounts are given of the various attempts made to put it into repair. The kings tried to do this, but failed, or are reported as having done so. Asa is said to have stripped it:—"Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hands of his servants: and king Asa sent them to Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying, There is a league between me and thee, and between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me."† After this Hazael came up:—"Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it: and Hazael set his face to go up to Jerusalem. And Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Abaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the Lord, and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jerusalem."‡ Other accounts are furnished of similar transactions between that period and the final conquest of Jerusalem by the Babylonians, when, strange to say, all the vessels which Solomon had made were there to be taken and cut to pieces; being, however, something more than ordinary, they were all quite perfect again when the Hebrews came up out of their captivity.

(To be continued.)

* 1 Kings, xiv. 25-27.

† Ibid. 18-19.

‡ 2 Kings, xii. 17-18.

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[PRICE 2D.

OF CHRISTIANITY BEFORE CHRIST.—CHRISTNA.

THERE are millions of good men who believe that, prior to the time of Jesus, especially in countries far removed from Judea, there were no teachers who possessed sufficient insight into nature, duty, and the religious sentiment, to qualify them for laying down any system which would meet the deeper wants, satisfy the cravings, and exalt the aspirations of the human heart, mind, and spirit. They are not to be blamed for entertaining such notions, because they have never had the opportunity afforded them for discovering the truth, which proves to be directly the opposite of that which they believe. The fact is, there is not a single duty inculcated by the Christian, which was not taught both in Egypt and India many ages before the time of Jesus. In the latter country, the Hindu people speak of God as having come to earth in the form of a man, and while here as preaching beautiful sermons to mankind. In His words, or words supposed to be His, we find many almost parallel with those of Jesus; and it would not be difficult to show that, in these, He rose even above Jesus in urging many of the subtler points of religious truth and sentiment.

There is one work in which He figures largely as a speaker, it is called the "Bhagavad Gita, or the Sacred Lay." Strictly speaking, it is merely part of a larger work, the Mahabharata, it is an episode in that poem, which is divided into eighteen chapters. Mainly, it is composed of speeches delivered by "The Holy One," Christna, to a prince, upon the edge of a battle-field, in answer to questions proposed. It is not necessary to run through its whole as a work of art; we shall therefore rest content with furnishing our readers with a few passages, such as will afford gratification, and show that all of the practical and permanent in Christianity was taught in India before the time of Jesus.

In the second chapter the following occurs, and probably no ancient work contains a finer statement of the soul's conviction of its own Immortality. It is the Incarnate God who speaks. "The wise grieve not for dead or living. Never at any period did I or thou, or these kings of men, not exist, nor shall any of us at any time henceforward cease to exist. As the soul in this body undergoes the changes of childhood, manhood, and old age, so, hereafter, it obtains a new body. There is no existence for that

"which does not exist, nor is there any non-existence for what exists. That (being) by which all this universe is created, is indestructible. The finite bodies have been said to belong to an eternal, indestructible, and infinite spirit. He who believes that this spirit can kill, and he who thinks that it can be killed, are both of them wrong in their judgment. It neither kills nor is killed. It is not born nor dies at any time. Unborn, changeless, eternal, both as to future and past time, it is not slain when the body is killed. As a man abandons worn-out clothes, and takes other new ones, so does the soul quit worn-out bodies and enter other new ones. Weapons cannot cleave it; fire cannot burn it; it is impenetrable, inc combustible, and incapable of moisture. It is said to be 'invisible, incomprehensible, immutable.' Therefore, knowing it to be such, thou art not right to grieve for it. For to everything born death is certain—to everything dead regeneration is certain."

In another chapter, speaking of Immortality, he says: But there is another invisible external existence, superior to this visible one, which does perish when all things perish, called invisible and indivisible. This they call the highest walk. Those who obtain this never return. This is my supreme abode. But this Supreme Person, O son of Pritha! within whom all existing things exist, and by whom all this universe is caused to emanate, may be approached by devotion, which is intent on Him alone.

Returning to the first chapter, we find him saying, "When man has put away all desires which enter the heart, and is satisfied by himself in himself, he is considered to be confirmed in spiritual knowledge. When his heart is not troubled by adversity, and all enjoyment in pleasure is fled, when he is free from passion, fear, and anger, and is constant in meditation, he is called a Muni (devotee or saint). Attachment to objects of sense arises in a man who meditates upon them; from attachment arises desire; from desire passion springs up; from passion comes bewilderment; from bewilderment confusion of the memory; from that destruction of the intellect, and then he perishes. But he who approaches the objects of sense with senses beneath his own control, free from love and hate, and having his soul well disposed, attains to tranquillity of thought. . . . He who does not practise reflection has no calm. When a man is disposed in accordance with his roaming senses, it snatches away his spiritual knowledge, as the wind does a ship on the waves. The self-governed man is awake in that which is night to all other beings; that in which all other beings are awake is night to the self-governed. He unto whom all desires enter in the same manner as rivers enter the ocean, which is always full, yet does not remove its bed, can obtain tranquillity, but not he who cherishes desires. That man who, casting off all desires, acts without interest, free from selfishness and egotism, attains to tranquillity. This is the condition of the Supreme Being."

For all practical purposes this is the same as the teaching of Jesus in the Mountain Sermon: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"* The

* Matthew vi. 19-23.

words vary, but the underlying thought is precisely the same; and, as far as "the spiritual meaning" of Jesus is concerned, it is difficult to discover in what sense it transcends the other. The Hindu author had evidently conceived all those deeper ideas of the means through which the human is to be linked with the Divine as clearly as he of Nazareth had done; and in modern times, when passages from the Hindu are given in our pulpits, without acknowledgment, the congregation is delighted by the spiritual insight of their pastor.

In the third chapter the following passage occurs, which would serve for a translation of 'Matthew' into Sanscrit: "He who remains inert, restraining the organs of sensual action, and pondering in his heart on objects of sense, is called a false pietist of bewildered soul." The passage in 'Matthew' reads: "He who looketh upon a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."* The thought is the same in both passages, and each may stand for the other when rendered into any other language.

In the fourth chapter, called "Devotion through Spiritual Knowledge," the "Divine One" says: "There is no purifier in the world like spiritual knowledge. A man who is perfected in devotion finds it spontaneously in himself, in the progress of time. He who possesses faith, if intent on it, acquires spiritual knowledge; and, having acquired spiritual knowledge, he soon attains to supreme tranquillity. He who ignores the truth, and is devoid of faith, being of doubtful mind, perishes." Is not this much the same as that saying of Jesus, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened"? †

In the following chapter the "Divine One" says the Lord of the world creates neither the faculty of acting nor actions, nor yet the desire for the fruits of actions. But each man's own nature produces them. The Lord receives no one's vice or virtue. Knowledge is surrounded by ignorance. Therefore, creatures err. But the knowledge of those in whose souls that ignorance is destroyed by knowledge, lights up that Supreme One like the sun. Those whose thoughts are on that spirit, whose souls are in it, who exist in it, and are intent on it, their sins being put away by spiritual knowledge, attain to that place whence there is no return. . . . Even in this life, those whose heart persists in equability, surmount the tendencies of their natures. For the Supreme Being is free from sin and equal-minded. Therefore they partake of the nature of the Supreme Being. One should not be overjoyed when one obtains what one loses, nor grieve when one meets with what one desires not, but should be of unwandering thoughts, not deluded (by the world), seeking to know the Supreme Being, remaining within the Supreme Being. He whose soul is not attached to the contact of external objects, and who finds pleasure within himself, whose soul is united, by means of devotion, to the Supreme Being enjoys imperishable happiness. . . . Those holy men whose sins are destroyed, who have solved all doubt, who are self-governed, and delight in the good of all beings, obtain extinction in the Supreme Spirit. Extinction in the Supreme Spirit is near at hand for those who are free from desire and anger, and are temperate, of thoughts restrained, and who know their own souls. Much of Jesus' teaching is very similar to this.

We shall turn to another section of this subject in our next.

* Matthew v. 28.

† Matthew xii. 13.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XI.

THE ALBIGENSIAN CRUSADE.

THERE are certain moments in history infinitely solemn, when the time seems big with fate. Such an epoch was the year 1200. The hour had now come for a great movement of the common mind in Europe. The struggles of the Church had hitherto been with the Empire and with Feudalism; and even while she had chained the souls of men in the twofold bond of ignorance and superstition, she had often been ready to stand between the oppressor and the oppressed—always when it was her interest so to do. She had so far moved with the age, as to be doing in some measure the work the age required. Now, her quarrel is not to be with emperors, and kings, and barons, but with the people; persecution and tyranny are to be the chief characters written on her subsequent history; and the fire and the fagot, the thumb-screw and the torture, will henceforth be her principal modes of argument and instruction. We are now to look at the earliest result of this change in the spirit of the time. Languedoc was, as already shown, ripe for revolt against spiritual despotism. The danger to the Church was great. The man who met it was stern, hard, and inflexible. Ever sterner and more inflexible Pope Innocent became as the heresies appeared to be incurable. And in the midst of his cogitations as to what should be done, the news reached him, that one of his legates in Languedoc had been assassinated. This was the signal for a thirty years' bloody war, in which every outrage to which fanaticism can lead men was practised, and in which, for the first time during the Middle Age, the Western Church imbrued her hands in the blood of heretics. Whatever were the vices and crimes which had disgraced the Church during those mediæval centuries, she was as yet free from the "blackest of all her crimes," as yet she was free from the stain of blood; not, be it remembered, because she had been more tolerant, or less jealous of her authority through those centuries, but because up to this time she had with few exceptions found means to make humanity bend beneath her yoke. Now, however, the fatal die is cast, and a Crusade shall be preached, not as heretofore against the Saracens and the Turks, but against these heretics, who disturb the peace of the Church.

A few words of explanation are demanded with reference to the event which led to the Crusades against the Albigenses. The chief city of Languedoc, and head-quarters of the heresies, was Toulouse. The Count of Toulouse had already been excommunicated by the Pope, because he tolerated the heretics and dared to harbour Jews. The legate who was assassinated had presumed to present himself in the palace of the Count, and there, in insulting terms, to upbraid him with his disobedience to the Church. The Count, a choleric man, who cared nought for Pope or Church, and made a jest of religion in any shape, let fall some hasty words. One of his knights, interpreting the wishes of the Count by the expressions of his anger, followed the insolent legate and struck him dead. The Pope saw his advantage in this, and his emissaries, the Cistercian monks, were spread throughout the North of France to preach vengeance against the heretics of Languedoc, against whom they laid the charge of murdering the legate. A different race were those men of the North, steeped in ignorance and blind submission to the Church; moreover a strong antipathy existed between them and the people

of the South. Their duty and their passions thus seemed to concur in leading these barbarous warriors of the North on the Pope's errand of blood.

The infamous hero of this dreadful war was Simon de Montfort; ambitious, brutal, avaricious, and hypocritical, he was the fit instrument for the deed which was to be done. The Pope knew with whom he was dealing, and instigated his ambition by promising him the Countship of Toulouse, and his cupidity by calling to remembrance the enormous possessions attached thereto, while his hypocrisy and brutality both found scope in the butcheries which were to be enacted in the name of religion. This man was an Englishman, and, in right of his mother, Earl of Leicester. He was already well known as a veteran in the Crusades against the Turks. Not to be unjust to him, let it be acknowledged that he was a man of unquestionable bravery; the credit of severe morals, which doubtless contributed to his success as a soldier, must also be allowed him, and it must be remembered that many of the atrocities of the war were the doings of the priests who accompanied his army. It is said, too, that he caused the honour of his female prisoners to be always respected. But as the leader in a war such as this was, as the merciless executor of the commands of the Church, his name must ever be infamous, and his memory execrated amongst men. It is a sin for which Hallam should not be easily forgiven, that he dared to couple the names of this man and of Cromwell together, by saying that he was "a man like Cromwell, whose intrepidity, hypocrisy, and ambition, marked him for the hero of a holy war." No, no! Cromwell's name stands first in the muster-roll of fame, as the great good man who dared all for the right and the truth—while this other stands as the tool of a bloodthirsty priest, who but too thoroughly executed his execrable office. The one ever honourable, and beloved by all good men; the other for ever hateful and accursed.

Such, then, was the man who, with an army of 300,000 Germans, Lorrainers, Burgundians, and Frenchmen, induced by the promises of plenary indulgences for all their sins, by the hope of plunder, by the fear of the Church, and by fanaticism, undertook to root out the heresy in Languedoc, and with fire and sword to carry destruction among its peaceful citizens, whose only crime was that they dared to think for themselves, and would not bow to priestly power.

The Count of Toulouse, when he saw the preparations thus making, became alarmed, and sued to the Pope for peace, which on certain conditions Innocent agreed to grant; Raymond (such was the name of the Count) submitted to the conditions, and disgraced himself in the eyes of his subjects by allowing himself to be scourged by priests in the chapel where the murdered legate was buried. The young and noble Count of Beziers, the nephew of Raymond, was indignant at the cowardly conduct of his uncle, and openly defied the Pope to do his worst; this was the occasion of the turning of the army of Montfort against Beziers, with the siege of which the war against the Albigeuses commenced. By a piece of refined cruelty, worthy of Priestcraft, Raymond was called upon to take the command of a division of the Crusading army, and thus to lead them against his own nephew and subjects—and to his eternal infamy he did this. The Pope's legate, the Abbot of Citeaux, was with the besieging army, and had drawn up a list of the citizens who were to be put to death; the intrepid young Count, however, refused to surrender a man. Misjudging the force of the enemy, he sallied out upon him, was repulsed with great loss, and the Crusaders entered the open gates of the town pell-mell with him and his surviving followers.

The difficulty now was, how to distinguish the heretics from the ortho-

dox in the work of blood about to commence. The legate was appealed to, and returned this memorable answer, "*Oh! kill 'em all! kill 'em all! The Lord will know His own.*" And so the butchery commenced. "The inhabitants withdrew," says the chronicler, "as many as could, men as well as women, into the great church of St. Nazaire, the priests of which had the bells tolled until the butchery was completed. Nothing could prevent the whole of them being put to the sword; not so much as one could escape. These murders and butcheries were the greatest pity that ever has been seen and heard. The town was given up to pillage, and fire was set to it in every quarter, so that it was laid waste and in ruins, and not a living thing remained in it." The number who perished is stated at 60,000. The entire country was next laid waste, the castles seized, such men as were taken burnt, the woman violated, and the children massacred. After an ineffectual defence of Carcassonne, the young Count was taken, and died by poison; and Simon de Montfort then took possession of a depopulated country. Such of the Languedocians as had not been killed fled to the mountains.

But had the Crusade ended here the priestly work of butchery would have been but half-done. The Church had determined to exterminate the heretics, and, as yet, their chief stronghold, the States of the Count of Toulouse, remained untouched. Accordingly, in spite of his submission, in spite of the degradation he had subjected himself to, to obtain peace with the Pope, a new Crusade was preached against Raymond and his subjects, on the pretence that he had not fully complied with the conditions required by the Church. He was bound, said the Pope, to deliver up to the stake such of his subjects as the priests might condemn. Now it was that Raymond remembered the heroism of his nephew, and saw in its true light the depth of his own infamy. The tens of thousands of murdered men, women and children, whose massacre he had countenanced, rose up in judgment against him. The old man shed scalding tears over that fearful past, and out of the depths of his despair arose a new man. "No! not another victim should be sacrificed with his consent; the bloodhounds had had enough, and more than enough, already." He defied the Pope, and prepared for war to the death.

The Albigenses had seen in the case of Beziers and Carcassonne the danger of trusting to their walled towns, and now they shut themselves up in the castles of the nobles, who were most of them favourable to the heretics. The castles were taken in detail, and no mercy shown on either side. One specimen will suffice. "At the taking of Lavaur," says one of the monkish chroniclers of these horrors, and whose account as a dutiful son of the Church is not open to suspicion, "Almery, Lord of Montreal, and other knights to the number of eighty, were dragged out of the castle, and were immediately hung, by the noble Count Montfort's order, on gibbets; but as soon as Almery, who was the tallest of them had been hung up, the gibbets fell, not having been securely fixed in the ground. The Count, seeing that this would occasion great delay, ordered the throats of all the rest to be cut; and the order being extremely acceptable to the pilgrims (*i.e.*, the Crusaders) the latter soon massacred them on the spot. The Lady of the castle, who was Almery's sister, and an accursed heretic, was then thrown into a well, which was afterwards filled with stones. After this our pilgrims collected the innumerable heretics who had filled the castle, and burnt them alive *with infinite joy.*" Is it man or devil, speaks?

At intervals through thirty years these horrors continued. At the call of the Church, and in the name of God (heaven save the mark!), these Crusa-

ding pilgrims carried fire and sword through this beautiful country of Languedoc. The Church would gladly have annihilated the very soil on which the heretics had trod. To sum up, 'their cities were destroyed, their country laid waste; and at length when the beautiful language, the arts and the industry of these provinces had disappeared, and not before, the executioners became weary of their odious work.' The war terminated about the year 1229. And was the maintenance of the Catholic faith secured; was the Church the stronger for her work of blood? We shall see.

JAS. L. GOODING.

SATAN AND HIS VICTORIES.

BETWEEN the two points of time, that of the "Fall" and "the Advent of the Redeemer," the Evil Spirit was allowed to do almost as He pleased with the unhappy race of mortals. They fell beneath His power, and became His servants. He taught them to hate God, and being possessed of a power like God, that of being in millions of persons at the same time, His success was sure to be perfect. He is believed to be Omniscient and Omnipresent, with only one exception. It is generally supposed that He does not enter Heaven; but there is a sort of set-off in the corresponding conviction that the Divine One does not enter Hell, the supposed home of this Unholy Being. There is, however, a difference of opinion among pious men upon this very point. They do not say that God enters Hell, but many believe Satan of right and frequently enters Heaven. To justify this they appeal to the opening of the Book of Job, where it is so distinctly set forth that, "with the Sons of God, He presented himself in the Court of Heaven." The manner in which the narrative is written justifies the belief of His habitually entering there; and hence the assertion made by so many that He also joins and belongs to the angelic hosts.

But, although there are men who differ upon this point, all the orthodox agree in representing Him as a Person, as an Individual, who goes about, like a raging lion, seeking whom He may devour. They speak of Him as One who has taken up arms against every form of goodness and pious trust. Although He believes, worships, and trembles, He endeavours to prevent all human beings from believing. Nothing irritates Him more than to hear of a liar abandoning his lying; of a thief abandoning his thieving; or of a drunkard abandoning his drunkenness. Nothing pleases Him more than to hear of a Christian man who believed that God ordered the Jews to butcher the Canaanites, young and old together, ceasing to believe it; of a pious orthodox man who believed that it was the duty of all human beings to endeavour to imitate "David, the man after God's own heart", ceasing to believe, and teaching his children instead, how earnestly they must esteem that king of Israel as one whose example should be shunned even as they would shun a pestilence; or of a Christian man who believed that millions would be roasted in Hell for ever to the honour of God and the praise of His holy Name, ceasing to believe, and publicly declaring it to be a libel upon the goodness of the Eternal. Thus, according to the common theory, He is ever on the side of evil, although it must be confessed that many of His aims, as represented by the orthodox, are not quite so evil as they say.

Theologians speak of God as the Supreme, but in sober truth, practically they represent the Devil as exercising the greatest measure of power, and as

succeeding with greater certainty in His aims. When all the failures on the part of God, and successes on the part of the Evil One, are set forth, what else can honestly be said than this, that the latter has fully achieved, while the former has positively failed in His purposes? There is scarcely a single Sunday-School scholar in England that has not been taught to say, 'God created angels and men for His Glory'—but, according to the popular theory, believed so earnestly by millions, it is the Devil who has profited the most by the transaction. According to the general belief, the road to hell is very broad, and is always crowded with travellers, while that to heaven is narrow, and but sparsely supplied with the redeemed. That the great majority go to hell, to burn everlastingly, is not questioned by any orthodox divine. In fact, the grand centre of Christian orthodoxy lies in this, that God has experienced the greatest difficulty in saving for Himself even a single soul out of all the millions He created for His glory. There they stood, all bearing the mark of His wisdom, His power, His goodness, there was no other power in the universe capable of forming them, and He in love and tenderness had made, but could not secure one of them for Himself. As a loving Father, he desired to make His children happy, but could not, because the Evil One had interfered to turn aside the current of His love, being resolved to appropriate the work of the Divine, in order to fill up the caverns of hell. As their master, He held them firmly, and could reckon upon having countless millions more. The Great Maker desired to have some at least of His own preserved from ruin; not all, but a remnant, yet that could not be. There was only one way open, and that involving nothing less than that God Himself, in the form of a man, should descend to earth, and die a painful death, so that through the mightiness of the sacrifice a chance of saving some, not all, from the grasp of the destroyer might be secured. Before assembled angels and men He had to die this painful death, and then the only result was that He had a chance of saving for Himself a poor remnant of those He had made.

We do not make this doctrine, but only repeat in clear unambiguous words, the Creed of the Churches. We do not even believe it to be any other than a doctrine of Devils, but merely exhibit in the plainest form that which we have been asked to believe, as a doctrine from God, and cannot. And in presence of these results, which the said Churches speak of as being definite and unalterable, we ask, What else can be said than that if the theory be true, then God has signally failed in His aims; whereas the Devil has quite as signally succeeded?

What else but failure can it be, when even the peace of Heaven was not only invaded and destroyed, but rendered for ever insecure? He who believes that this war occurred in heaven, cannot consistently say it is impossible to be repeated. They who have never heard of suicide being committed through taking arsenic, are less likely to take it for that purpose than those who have. The peace of a kingdom once violated, is never afterwards so perfectly secure. And how can there be the same measure of joy, when there will never fail to be a sense of the agony that millions, once blessed and happy, are enduring? Where there was love and brotherhood in the house, all the members endure sorrow over the fall and transportation of one of its members. They may be perfectly innocent; but being as bodies from whence a limb has been rudely torn, they must feel the pain. And be it remembered that through God creating man for His glory, the Devil has gained countless millions of servants, whom otherwise he could never have had. And if the

Churches will not believe in the Divine failure, then let them honestly recant their inane talk about the power of the Devil, and his enormous success in 'luring the children of God to everlasting perdition'.

We look at the logical consequences involved in the popular theory, and then consistently deny its validity. This is considered to be unfair; for, according to the ordinary law, we are taught to look to principles in the abstract, and in their own nature, not to their results. In the majority of instances that is perfectly true; yet it is none the less true, that there are cases in which the results are the only means at our disposal, through which to test the nature of the adopted means, or the rightfulness of the law; and this is one of them. We take the results spoken of by the Churches, and then declare them to be evidences which ignore the God of the Universe to set up a Demon in His place. If the prevalent theory be true, then the Chinese are wise in praying to the Devil, to abstain from injuring them? If it be true, then, undoubtedly, we have more to fear from the Devil than we have to hope from God! If it be true, then, throughout the eternal ages, the said Demon will be able triumphantly to point out millions whom He has snatched from the very verge of redemption. If it be true, then the Devil will sit in majesty, to survey His untold millions, while God will not be able to glance at a tithe of their number amongst His attendants. And if it be true, then who shall say that Satan will not, now that His ranks have been so enormously increased, at some future period redeem the ground He lost, and recover His dignity and power?

Many pious churchmen will call this, blasphemy! but wrongly so. The blasphemy lies on the side of those who inculcate premises from whence these fearful conclusions are naturally deduced. We do not add unto, or diminish, the presumed facts, but merely read out their meaning in plain English. And if men are shocked at the profanity, let them remember that we also are shocked. To our minds, it is equally disgusting and painful, when such pernicious theories are laid down to obtain the approval of the crowd. We protest against the doctrine, because it strikes at the root of all our hopes of progress and future glory. If God has been foiled in His plans in favour of goodness, how can we hope to succeed? Why give blood and life for the purchase of blessings to be enjoyed by our race, if even God Himself had been compelled to see His intended good turned to evil. The Churches say that, although He died upon the Cross to save mankind, there are more who annually go to hell, than went thither at the time when He offered Himself as a ransom and sacrifice. If, then, He failed, why should we hope to succeed? And why labour after the attainment of that which, by His failure, is shown to be unattainable?

In opposition to such blasphemous theories—for they are such, although clothed in the garments of sanctity—we protest our belief that God has never been foiled, or prevented from achieving His purposes. Upon the basis of His absolute Supremacy we can build securely; but if that were stricken away, we should feel that all our hope of good must be uncertain, for we can, in that case, have no proof of the permanence of goodness, or the ultimate triumph of those principles of manly virtue and nobleness which are dear to every generous spirit.

But we cannot close this inquiry without entering a solemn protest against this Satanic element in the popular theory, which is one of the most immoral and destructive it is possible to conceive. The doctrine strikes at the root of all which is pure and holy, generous and just; and if it be true, then is

justice banished from the Universe. There is no sin that man can commit in time, which will justify the infliction of torment through eternity. A creature of an hour, who cannot comprehend eternity, is not responsible to an extent which cannot be estimated. We can only punish men justly, in accordance with their powers of perception; hence, the idiot escapes altogether. But if it be true, that the Evil One first fought against God, with no mere slight chance of success, and then was permitted to combat with man, it is evident the latter could not cope with a supernatural power with any chance of gaining a victory. Then, being overthrown, to say that he shall be doomed to everlasting fire, is manifestly to violate every principle of justice, as well as to represent God as a relentless tormentor.

And if it were true that such must be the result, then there is but the one sound conclusion at which we can arrive; namely, that the Devil has exercised more authority in the Universe than God has done—and that this influence He will continue to exert throughout all coming ages. If, throughout all time, the Devil is to have and to hold by far the greater majority of those whom God created for His pleasure, and honour, and glory, then that conclusion is inevitable. They were created for purposes which they do not subserve; they were intended to be what they cannot be; they were endowed with powers which have been used for other purposes than those for which they were intended. And why so? God did not intend them to sin; all the Churches say that; but the Devil lured them, God lost them, and the result is, that the Evil One will triumphantly hold the handiwork of God as his victims.

But it is said, that God has gained the victory. In every church and chapel in the land, it is set forth in sermon and song, that in the heavenly war, the Divine One triumphed, and will eventually triumph on earth! What do they mean who use this language? Or do they use the words without attaching any meaning to them? If an enemy come against England, and succeed in carrying nineteen-twentieths of its people into slavery, succeed in retaining them without permitting us even to hope for their release, can they who remain behind, amid the ruined residences, to count the miserable residue, boast of having gained a victory? The enemy lives and holds their brethren in chains, how then are they to set down and say we have triumphed? Across the water, with every wind, the cry of the manacled ones would give the lie to such empty vaunting; and so also throughout the ages, the popular theory being true, the cry of the damned will be a never-ceasing protest against the assumption that God has been victorious.

He is not the victor who has merely bound the foe. Subjugation and momentary conquest are not equal; and if Satan can retain his gains, He stands a master amid his world of slaves. The victory of God, if it have any meaning, must mean, not the mere locking up the damned in hell, for that will no more get rid of the evil than they do who would limit prostitution to certain licensed houses; it must mean the triumph of goodness; the victory of peace and love, or the bringing about that state of things in which not a tear or aching heart can be found in the Universe. Nothing short of that will justify the proud boast that evil has been trodden under foot.

P. W. P.

CHARITY AND THE CLAIMS OF THE POOR.

A LECTURE BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from p. 158.)

WE must do this, or we perish—as a nation, great and powerful as we are, we must do it, or we perish. I hear, indeed, the cry, that, while we are the richest in the universe, we cannot have any cause to fear. When distress cometh, then the wealthy will open their purses and give freely, so that the poor may be fed and clothed. Let us not be mistaken about this matter. The strength of a nation lieth not in its wealth, but in something else which wealth cannot purchase. There was more gold in Rome when the Empire was waning than when it was rising. It was not the abundance of money which operated to raise Englishmen from the depths of savage life to their present position, but the superabundance of energy, selfhood, and manful independence, love of their country, and care for all its concerns. It was great thoughts, and manful endeavours to convert them into facts, which led to our elevation, as they, and only they, have done with all other nations. But there is the same yawning abyss for us, that swallowed up the others; and if we continue content to boast of our wealth there is no doubt of whitherward we shall be tending.

It is patient industry, honourable independence, inflexible perseverance, which maketh men worthy component parts of a strong nation. I had far rather boast of there being no pauper in the land to test our charity, than have it to tell how good the rich are in freely supporting a million beggars. Charity is a beautiful thing, but the spirit that loveth to depend on its dole is not beautiful. It is an accursed spirit which, as a canker, never fails to eat away the heart. Let but the number of those increase who are content to live upon alms, and, exactly as they rise in numerical force, will be our decline as a people. For they who have bartered their manhood to obtain the bread of charity, would barter everything honourable in England for a similar purpose. Such men would give the ashes of Hampden for a silver coin; and, in gladness of heart, would take the smallest piece of gold for the fame of Naseby and the Armada. There are many great points in the human character, but when man becomes a charity-hunter, he changes his heart for a wolf's, and loveth neither honest freedom, nor simple truth. Thus, he who is content to boast of the widening circle of Charity, little dreameth of the destructive mine it prepares beneath our feet. Not that we are to dismiss 'Charity' from England, for that would be to banish one of the most beautiful ornaments of life; yet we must do all that lies in our power to induce men to avoid building their hopes, and placing their dependence upon it.

The Roman nobles were charitable. They spread the tables—they invited the poor to eat; and when the talk began about the poverty of many who dwelt in the Eternal City, a laugh was raised by the unwise, who said, 'See what money remains!' Ever-increasing was the number of those who attended at the provided feasts; and ever decreasing was that sprout of manhood within them, which gave the victory, and secured the ascendancy of their ancestors. The early Romans, like our own ancestors, depended upon themselves; and, as it was asked why the Romans of the latter days did not retain power to do what their sires had done, so also I ask, Why is it that the poor of London have been unable to live through a short, but severe frost, without collecting in misery and hunger around our Courts, when

their forefathers had to live through long frosts without making such an exhibition of themselves? If our working ancestors could fight through worse trials, why has this generation of toilers failed? We dare not say that Nature has been more unkind; for we have passed through several years with an almost perfect immunity from the terrible visitations of the Frost King; why then—if our forefathers made provision in every single summer for the long winter, which pretty surely followed—have our labourers failed in providing, during many good seasons, for one bad one? Is it because they are, on the whole, less largely remunerated for their labour? Are the average wages lower? Are provision and clothing much more costly? Are the expenses, in the shape of rent and taxation, to which they are necessarily put, much higher? Or are they less provident in their habits? less competent to deal with the money which they have at their disposal? To my mind it appears perfectly clear that all good men are bound to devote their attention to the study of these questions. We may spend our breath and waste our time attending to the affairs of France, and be merely laughed at for our pains; but here is a question of national concern, which cannot be studied without profit. And the man who shrinks from considering it, who falls back upon the idea that he will give his money to meet distress, and thereby honestly wipe his hands of the matter, is but deceiving himself upon a point of duty, and assisting to ruin his country. That nation succeeds the best whose citizens unanimously devote themselves to the task of slaying the evils of whose existence they have become conscious.

If a large body of working-men were suddenly called upon to account for all this misery, they would without hesitation refer it to the various forms of injustice under which their class labours—partly proceeding from bad government, and partly from the selfishness of employers. Happily, however, this would not be said without dissentient voices being heard, for a knowledge of other causes is possessed by many of those who toil. Still, the majority do not perceive any causes of their poverty beside injustice and cupidity; but, while recognising the evils of which they complain, and, to the best of my ability, denouncing them; I can see others also, which, flattering themselves, they entirely overlook. It is my firm conviction, a conviction resting upon observation and experience, that the working classes, estimated as a whole, do not over, but rather understate, the evils of which they justly complain. They are neither wisely, justly, nor humanely treated; and were it not for their great patience and wonderful power of endurance, combined as these are with an all-controlling respect for the law, England would not have remained so quiet within, so free from civil brawls, as she has been, while surrounding nations have been tossing on the sea of revolution. It is not that they have had no cause of complaint, but that they have patience coupled with the vain hope that quiet endurance will shame their governors into acting justly. Statesmen may indulgently flatter themselves that the millions are content with what has been done for them, and satisfied with the way in which they are governed; but he who knows their true state of feeling is otherwise persuaded.

But, granting that all which the working classes have answered be true, admitting, as I admit, all their charges of injustice, still the question will have to be answered—Why are the evils they complain of permitted to exist?—why does this class continue to suffer so much wrong? In their own hands they have the redeeming power—why is it unused? Simply because those means of cure which are at their own disposal are put by them to such uses as are

calculated to decrease their power of resisting the injustice which cupidity and power decree them. They have many enemies, but none who possess power to inflict upon them a tithe of the harm they inflict upon themselves. There is no class in England strong enough to do them wrong when they have resolved not to endure it. Thus, while confessing their correctness when describing the wrongs inflicted upon them, I add thereunto, that the chief evil, which also gives power unto the others, lies in their own action; and, consequently, that, mainly, the cure must be wrought by themselves.

Is not a remarkable fact that the clear income of thousands of petty traders falls below that of an equal number of mechanics; and that, while the former are compelled to maintain a decent appearance and pay their way—having to meet many calls upon their purse from which the mechanic is free—the latter, when a few weeks have to be tided over without working, are plunged into an appalling condition of destitution? Getting, on the average, more than these little tradesmen, why do they need more assistance? Clearly because they unwisely use the amount of their earnings. They take no thought for the morrow, and hence are punished under those inexorable laws which recognise nothing short of obedience, and which sentimental feeling cannot suspend.

Were I asked to name the most potent source of the working man's misery, I should name his "habit of drinking"—the waste of his money upon that which is not bread, but which brings destitution, degradation, disease, and ruin upon him. Thomas Carlyle has powerfully said that "Gin is justly named the most authentic incarnation of the Infernal Principle in our times; too indisputable an incarnation; Gin, the black throat into which wretchedness of every sort, consummating itself by calling on delirium to help it, whirls down; abdication of the power to think or resolve, as too painful now, on the part of men whose lot of all others would require thought and resolution; liquid Madness sold at fourpence the quartern, all the products of which are and must be, like its origin, mad, miserable, ruinous, and that only." There cannot be any other outcome for the toiler who pursues this course; and in the tavern bill of England the labourer may read the cause of his political, social, and moral weakness.

It is to be recognised, however, that their small means are wasted in other ways, for, as a rule, there is little of good management in the mechanics' home, Beautiful and numerous exceptions are everywhere visible, which only the more conclusively establish the general charge. If George Brown can go out comfortably and warmly clad, feeling that he can return at any hour to find things smooth and cheerful, why should David Hodge, who, in the shop with Brown, earns the same wages, be unable to do the same? Brown, indeed, is frequently sneered at by his mates for being so "terribly steady, neither drinking nor keeping St. Monday with the rest;" but, as he, not without point, replies, he enjoys himself better in other ways; and if he were not very careful they would have no one to go to, in their hour of need, from whom to borrow a shilling. Obedient to the ordinance of Nature, he wisely uses his means; why should his revilers be free, in sports and drinking, to waste theirs?—more so, especially, when they are sure to rob him if they pursue that course. They who lived the life of wild pleasure, and who earned the same as the honest, saving Brown, die as paupers in the workhouse, after having been kept there months or years at the expense of the more saving, and George was taxed towards keeping them. In their days of pleasure they bitterly cursed the rich for robbing the poor; why, then, assist them in doing

it? If Brown was robbed by the rich, in the form of unjust taxation, is it not even a greater crime on the part of these men that they help to rob him by means of the poor's-rate? If men will waste their means, then, when all is done, they had better make a hole in the Thames than stop to live on the labour of those who have earned no more, and have been taxed as unjustly as themselves.

(To be continued.)

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF SOLOMON.

(Continued from p. 160.)

BUT consistently with our knowledge of the condition of the Hebrews, we cannot believe the records relating to the treasure said to have been collected by David, and applied by Solomon, with considerable additions, to the building and its decorations. In our times, having the gold fields open, the amount of gold in daily use may be estimated as so vastly exceeding the amount held in ancient days, as to render all comparisons perfectly absurd; but, if we believe the account given by the Chronicler,* David handed over to Solomon, as public money, being the savings of his reign, the sum of 100,000 talents of gold, and 1,000,000 talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight, for it was in abundance. Moreover, and as greatly complicating the matter, it is set forth that David gave a sum which belonged to him, not as King of Israel, but in his private capacity. The Chronicler in addition, states, that he had resolved to give of his own proper goods, "3,000 talents of gold, and 7,000 talents of refined silver, to overlay the "walls."† Then the chief men of Israel gave 5,000 talents, and 10,000 drams of gold, with 10,000 talents of silver, all of which were to be used in building up this glorious temple.

Now, I doubt not, that people, generally speaking, read and hear of these immense sums without conceiving of their immensity—never once imagining themselves to be dealing with an amount of wealth such as no ancient nation possessed—never once thinking of taking a pencil and working out the mass into modern coin, and yet it is only by doing this that any clear perception of the truth can be arrived at. For instance, the Jewish talent is generally estimated by the best of Biblical authorities at 125 lbs. Troy, or 93 lbs. 12 ozs. Avoirdupois; so that if we mould all the talents of gold into Troy pounds, they will weigh 12,500,052 lbs. Troy. And taking the silver in like manner, it will weigh 127,125,000 lbs. Troy. This immense mass of gold, pure and "holy," with the silver in like condition, we are to believe that, before his death, David gave to Solomon for the temple, and not only gave it, but also marked out how it was to be used; as, for instance, how many pounds were for the tables, how many for the sacred candlesticks, &c., and all accurately weighed out for each set of objects. But this was only David's gift. Independently of it, Solomon had to gather of gold and silver the pious gifts from all quarters; and, judging from the accounts preserved by the Chronicler, he must have given as much as his father. What he gave, however, is involved in obscurity, and most probably the narrator intended us to understand that his wealth was mainly lavished in the payment of artificers, and in obtaining wood, so that what David gave was used for the temple itself in the way of decoration, and for providing the candlesticks, with other necessities.

But we will look at that sum again, 12,500,052 lbs. of gold, reduced into sovereigns, will form £648,002,496, and the 127,125,000 lbs. of silver, converted into our current coin, will make £381,875,000, or if, with Dr. Kitto, we com-

* 1 Chron., xxi. 14.

+ Ibid., xxix. 4.

hine the whole, we shall have £1,020,377,406, and as the same authority says, "To accumulate such a sum during the 33 years of his reign over the United Kingdom, would have required David and his nobles to lay by £31,000,000 per annum:"—a sum perfectly incredible for all such persons as feel themselves to be justified in permitting common sense to aid them in the matter. Dr. Kitto, in relation to this, quotes a passage from a work published in the year 1722, which is worthy of notice. The author says: "I have read a pamphlet, printed about a year and a half before the peace of Utrecht was concluded, which (as it was said) was written by the command of Queen Anne's ministry, that the subjects might be convinced of the necessity of a peace with France, and among the powerful motives made use of in that pamphlet, one of the strongest was, that the nation was fifty millions of pounds sterling in debt, which the author affirmed was the eighth part of the value of the whole kingdom. If that be true, then there was much above three times the value of this kingdom laid out upon the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, which was built by Solomon, which is much above the value of two of the best kingdoms in Europe."^{*}

The comparison thus suggested may be pursued upon the more exact materials we now possess. If the above statement be correct, the value of this kingdom, which probably means the value of the real property, has increased in a proportion scarcely less astonishing than that of the national debt. The debt which, at fifty millions, excited apprehension in Queen Anne's reign, is now £768,789,240, and has been more. But the property which, at the same time, was reckoned at four hundred millions (*i.e.*, eight times fifty millions) is now about six times that amount—the estimated value, at twenty-five years' purchase, of the real property assessed under the property and income-tax being £2,352,112,425. Yet, of this immense sum, the money left by David for the temple would not be much less than one-half (say five-twelfths). It would exceed eight years' purchase of all the costly tillage of this country; and equal eleven years of the annual value of the real property in Great Britain. It would be equal to eleven and a half years' value of all the leading manufactures of the realm, and to twenty years' value of all the exported produce and manufactures of the country. It would also absorb, for about the same period, all the public revenue of the United Kingdom.[†]

The greatest difficulty connected with this subject, is connected with the absolute impossibility of any person adequately conceiving such an amount of wealth. The Sunday-School scholars are trained to speak of it with precisely the same freedom as they speak of nuts and oranges, and other objects, whose number is easily taken; and through becoming familiar with the amount as represented on paper, it seems to be believed that a true knowledge of the whole is obtained. But the truth is quite otherwise. There is not a man in England, who conceives the amount correctly, who would think of saying it had ever been collected into one city. When the Bank of England has £25,000,000 sterling in its coffers, the rate of interest will be so low that money will be a perfect drug in the market. It has never had any such sum in gold and silver in its possession, and is scarcely likely to have. Still, if in all history there ever was a country into which the precious metals were more likely to flow than into others, it is our own, yet we do not hope to hear of such a sum being lodged in the Bank coffers; and yet the amount named in the Chronicles is more than forty times as much as this, which even we, with all our chances, dare not hope to see concentrated.

Such, however, are the sums, as recorded in the Chronicles; and, without imputing any dishonourable motives to the writers, I feel perfectly secure of having your suffrages, when arguing that no sane man, who has given attention to the details of the subject, would venture to urge the possibility of any such accumulation having been accomplished by David. There was no profitable trade in David's time, there was no source of obtaining wealth, and hence the utter

^{*} Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations, vol. iv. p. 64.

[†] Ibid. pp. 64-65.

absurdity of assuming that an overplus of £31,000,000 was annually stored up as an excess over and above the expenditure. This, however, is a question of numbers; and, as I have frequently taken occasion to urge, we must not be too exacting in such matters, when dealing—as in this case—with old documents. The Biblical critics, as a rule, freely admit, not in their sermons, but in their learned discourses, that there must be some error in the numbers—they would reduce them to at least £120,000,000 sterling. The suggestion has been offered that it was not the Hebrew talent, but the Babylonian daric, the writer meant to name. It may have been so; but there is evidence to show that this “daric” was not known in the time of David.* To speak of the daric as pertaining to David’s time, is much the same as talking of the florin in the reign of King Henry. Yet, even if that were meant, the objection would still lie that no such sum could have been used, for its entire sum would amount to about six hundred millions. A great reduction, but only like reducing by littles our National Debt. Other writers have suggested that the Syriac talent was meant, and if so, the total would then amount to £120,000,000, which, although so much below the sum named by the Chronicler, is still fabulous in relation to the actual wealth of Israel.

It is curious the hunting up of old weights there has been, in order to lick this narrative into a shape somewhat more consistent with truth. When the critics come upon the words “everlasting fire,” they will not permit any one to modify the terms, but, in other cases, where orthodoxy finds a difficulty it cannot hide, then every Lexicon is hunted through in order to find some language in which there is a word which can be pressed into doing them a service. For my part, I would gladly pass over such a point by endorsing their views, were it not for the fact, that the details given of the ornamentation, are based upon the assumption that such an immense sum was really employed. For instance, we are informed that the gold used to overlay the innermost holy house, weighed 600 talents, which, in modern money, amounts to £3,600,000. The weight of the nails, all made of gold, was 50 shekels of gold, so that each nail was worth a fortune. Such a lavish use of the precious metal presupposes the presence of the impossible bulk stated to have been given by David to Solomon. And these details make the whole story to be so much of a piece, that we cannot fairly pass over the numbers as the errors of a copyist. If they stood alone, we could do it; but as it is, we must insist upon the whole being taken together, to stand or fall. But how came it about that such marvellous stories were written? Simply from the cause I have suggested, the story was written in the days of adversity. And parallel instances are easily found in our old Saxon chroniclers, who, in the days of Norman despotism, loved to dwell upon the “ancient splendour” of the public edifices. They might as well have boasted of the ancient skill in working metals, or any other imaginary luxury or magnificence. They were but as other men, who always magnify the past in order to dwarf the present. Even in these enlightened days thousands of Englishmen are to be found, who, without a blush, will talk of the great size and age of our ancestors. They seem to imagine that the people who lived in the time of the Edwards were stouter and stronger, as well as, on the average, attaining a much greater age. We know, however, from the old armour, and from statistics, that nothing of the kind occurred. Men, to-day, on the average, are stouter, bigger men, and attain a greater age. So with the poor Hebrews, who saw only the ruins of their former Temple; distance of time lent enchantment to their view, and enabled them to imagine things to have been far more glorious than they were. And it being so easy to set down on paper a few extra talents, there was nothing to hinder, and everything to induce them to do this; but before we accept their narratives, we should at least make sure of their truth.

* Horne’s *Introduct.* vol. iii.

(To be continued.)

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THE "BHAGAVAD GITA" AND MODERN FAITH.

IN order to convey as distinctly as possible the ideas of this book, we shall notice what Christna, the Holy One, says of his power and glory. Speaking of himself, he says: I am the cause of the production and dissolution of the whole universe. There exists no other being superior to me. On me is all the universe suspended, as pearls on a string. . . . I am the intellect of those beings who possess intellect, the strength of the strong. I do not exist in them, but they in me. . . . I am dear to the spiritually wise beyond possessions, and he is dear to me. If any one worshipping with faith desire to reverence any personage, I make that faith of his constant. . . . They who worship me come to me. The foolish, ignorant of lofty incorruptible Supreme Being, think that I who am not manifested, am endowed with a manifest form. Surrounded by my magic illusion I am not manifest to everybody. This deluded world does not comprehend me, who neither am born nor die. I know all beings, past, present, and future, but no one knows me.

In another chapter he says: The divisible is every living being. . . . The indivisible is said to be that which pervades all. . . . But there is another, the highest spirit (*Purusha*), designated by the name of the Supreme Soul, which, as the imperishable master, penetrates and sustains the triple world. Since I surpass the divisible, and am higher also than the indivisible, I am therefore, celebrated in the world and in the Vedas as the highest Person. He who, not deluded (by the world), knows me to be thus the highest Person, knows all things, and worships me in every condition.—This is a much clearer declaration of identity with the Divine One than is made about Jesus in any part of the New Testament. Nothing would gladden the heart of the Trinitarian more than to discover similar words in the Gospels reported as uttered by him, but it cannot be; yet who can avoid perceiving that when the idea was adopted by the early Christians they were only imperfectly acquainted with its origin, and but badly supplied with the Hindu forms of speech in which it was declared.

Returning to the early chapters, we find him saying: All beings fall into error as to the nature of the creation.* . . . He who, remembering me at

* Chap. vii.

the moment of death, quits the body and comes forth, enters my nature. . . . I am easy of access to that ever-devoted devotee who remembers me, with his thoughts never wandering to any other object. The great-minded who have recourse to me, reach the highest perfection. . . . All this universe has been created by me, embodied as the undeveloped principle. All things exist in me. I do not dwell within them and yet things do *not* exist in me. Behold this my lordly mystery. My spirit, which causes things to exist, sustains existing things, but does not dwell in them. Understand that even as the mighty air, which wanders everywhere, always dwells within the ether, so all existing things exist within me. . . . Under my superintendence, nature produces moveable and immoveable things. . . . The deluded despise me, when invested with a human form, not understanding my high existence, which is the lord of all things—vain in their hopes, their actions, and their knowledge; devoid of reflection, and inclining to the deluded nature of the Asuras. But the high-minded, inclining to the nature of the gods, worship me with their hearts turned to no other object, knowing me to be the imperishable principle of all things. Always glorifying me and striving with unbroken vows, and prostrating themselves before me, they worship me, constant in devotion. . . . I am the same to all beings. I have neither foe nor friend. But those who worship me with devotion, dwell in me and I also in them. Even if one who has led a very bad life worship me, devoted to no other object, he must be considered as a good man; for he has judged aright. He soon becomes religiously disposed, and enters eternal rest. Rest assured, that he who worships me, never perishes. For even those who are born in sin take the highest path, if they have recourse to me. . . . He who is free from aversion, well-disposed towards all beings, and also compassionate, unselfish and unconceited, the same in pain and pleasure, patient, contented, always devotional, self-governed, firmly resolute, who directs his heart and thoughts to me (only), and worships me, is dear to me; and he from whom the world receives no emotions, and who receives no emotions from the world, who is free from the emotions of joy, envy, and fear, is dear to me. He who has no worldly expectations, who is pure, upright, unconcerned, free from anxiety, and from any interest in all his undertakings, and worships me, is dear to me. He who neither rejoices nor hates, nor grieves nor loves, who has no interest in good or bad, and is full of devotion, is dear to me. The man who is the same to a foe or a friend, in honour or ignominy, the same in cold or heat, pleasure and pain, and free from interests, alike in blame or praise, taciturn, and content with whatever may be; who has no home, who is steady-minded and full of devotion, is dear to me. But those who attend (at the banquets of) this sacred manifestation, as I have explained it, full of faith, intent on me and worshippers of me, are dear to me above all.

In the sixteenth chapter the Holy One describes the two classes of men, those who look to duty and those who turn to pleasure. Of the first he says: Fearlessness, purification of his nature, continuance in devotion through spiritual knowledge, almsgiving, temperance and study, mortification, rectitude, harmlessness, truth, freedom from anger, indifference to the world, mental tranquillity, straightforwardness, benevolence towards all beings, modesty, gentleness, bashfulness, stability, energy, patience, resolution, purity, freedom from vindictiveness and from conceit, these are (the virtues) of the man who is born to the lot of the Divine. There is very little to choose between this and what Jesus says, "Ye have heard that it hath been

"said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the Publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the Publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."* The difference is only verbal, and if a man be all that Christina describes, he will also be what Jesus demands.

Of the men of pleasure the Holy One says: Men of the infernal nature do not comprehend either the nature of action, or that of cessation from action. They possess neither purity, nor yet morality, nor truthfulness. They deny that the universe has any truth in it, or is really constituted, or possesses a Lord, or that it has arisen in certain succession, or anything else, save that it is there for the sake of enjoyment. Maintaining such a view, their souls being ruined and their minds contracted, baneful in their actions and hostile to the world, they prevail for destruction. Indulging insatiable covetousness, filled with deceit, pride, and madness, in their folly they adopt wrong conceptions, and proceed, impure in their mode of life, indulging unlimited reflections that end in annihilation, considering the enjoyment of their desires as the highest object, persuaded that such (is life). Further on he describes these men as saying, 'I have now obtained this thing, and I will obtain that pleasure. I possess this wealth, and that, too, I will yet possess. I have slain this enemy, and I will slay others also. I am sovereign, I am enjoyer (of the world). I am perfect, strong, and blessed. I am opulent, and of noble birth. Who else is like me? I will sacrifice, I will give arms, I will slay.' This cannot fail to remind us of the passage in Matthew, "Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."†

The following passages are almost identical: Those men who practise severe self-mortification, not in accordance with Holy Writ, being full of hypocrisy and egotism, and gifted with desires, passions, and headstrong will, torturing the collection of elementary parts which compose the body, without sense, and torturing me also, who exist in the inmost recesses of the body, are of an infernal tendency. Matthew reports Jesus as saying, "Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."‡

It is impossible to do justice to this book by mere quotations, and, therefore, having appended a series of sayings, just as they caught the eye while reading, we shall quit this interesting and important subject. They are worthy of more than a passing thought. . . . To a noble man, infamy is worse than death. . . . Let the motive to action be in the action itself, never in its reward; for, wretched are they whose impulse to action is in its reward. . . . Whatever the most excellent practice other men imitate; the world follows the example they set. Love or hate exist toward the object of each sense. One should not fall into the power of these adversaries. . . . It is better to

* Matthew, v. 43-48.

† Matthew, vi. 2.

‡ Matthew, vi. 16.

do one's own duty, even though it be devoid of excellence, than to perform another's duty well. The heart is greater than the senses, and intellect is greater than the heart. . . . He who abandons all interest in the fruit of his actions, is always contented and independent. . . . The sacrifice of spiritual knowledge is better than a material sacrifice. . . . If thou wert even the most sinful of all sinners, thou wouldst cross over 'all sin' in the bark of spiritual knowledge. . . . The man of doubtful mind enjoys neither this world nor the other, nor final beatitude. . . . He who can resist, even in this life, the impulse arising from desire and anger, before the liberation of the soul from the body, is a devotee and a happy man. . . . Let man raise his soul by his own means; let him not lower his soul, for he is his soul's friend, and also his soul's enemy. His self is a friend to the soul of that man who has subdued his self by his soul. . . . The soul which is devoted to devotion, perceives the Spirit existing in all things, and all things in the Spirit, regarding everything alike in everything. . . . The heart is fickle and difficult to restrain; but it may be restrained by practice and temperance. . . . No one who acts uprightly goes to perdition. . . . When a man recognises the individual existence of everything to be comprehended in one, and to be only an emanation from it, he then attains to the Supreme Being. . . . As one Sun illumines the whole of the world, so does one Spirit illumine the whole of matter. . . . When a mortal reaches his dissolution and goodness is matured within him, he then approaches the spotless worlds of those who obtain the highest place. . . . Those who remain in goodness go upwards; those of the quality of badness remain in a middle state, those of indifference remaining in a state of the lowest qualities, go downward. . . . That gate of hell, which causes the destruction of the soul is threefold—desire, covetousness, anger. . . . He who neglecting the law of Holy Writ, lives after his own desires, attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the higher walk. . . . Let Holy Writ therefore be thy authority for what should be done and what not. . . . Mortal man who is gifted with faith, is of the same nature as that being on whom he reposeth that faith. . . . That sacrifice which is offered by those who regard its recompense, and also for the sake of deceiving by a false show of piety, is a bad one.

Curiously enough Christna and Jesus, agree in their theory, that their disciples are to be particularly careful in selecting proper persons unto whom to teach the doctrines they had given. The former says:—Thou must not reveal this (doctrine) to one who does not practice mortification, nor to any one who does not worship at any time, nor to one who does not care to hear it, nor to one who reviles me. This is very definite, but Dr. Thomson has no reason for saying that no such restrictions were placed upon the disciples, for what else does Jesus mean, in saying, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." Evidently the idea in the mind of each was that, not all, but only the better sort of men were to be chosen for the reception of his doctrines.

We shall turn to another section of this subject in our next. P. W. P.

NOTICE.—Next week will appear the concluding Article on "Confucius," and the following week we shall commence a series on "The Life and Teachings of Buddha."

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XII.

"SAINT" DOMINIC.

WHY did the Church persecute? Some, taking the effect for the cause, find the explanation and cause of the ages of persecution in the Crusades, which placed at the disposal of the priestly authority a large armed force to do its bidding. But although these did in some cases furnish the means, they do not explain the spirit which led the Church to use those means; although it may be true that the possession thereof may have led to their exercise in cases in which otherwise the Church would have been fain to submit. This seems to have been the case in the measures taken for the extirpation of heresy from Languedoc, but that the will and spirit would not have existed, even though the power had been absent, is a thing which cannot be admitted. Why, then, did the Church persecute? Because persecution was a logical necessity of the false idea upon which the Church had based herself. She had foisted a gigantic lie upon the world as truth, and when men came to see that it was a lie, the Church felt that she must either silence them or submit to be herself destroyed. And perhaps the most melancholy part of the business is this, that thousands of good men enrolled themselves on the side of the Church in this affair of persecution. They assumed the Church to be in the right, to have the Divine sanction for the authority she sought to exercise, to be the sole authorised judge of what was true and what false. Starting with this assumption, nothing is easier than to prove the justice, nay, even the mercy of persecution. 'For what can be more just than to enforce a rightful authority against a wrong-headed opposition; if it were just for the State to punish rebels, how much more just for the Church to do the same? Moreover, the action of the Church was the act of God Himself, to whom all things are just. And what, too, could be more merciful than to take measures, even coercive measures, to prevent men from running headlong to damnation?' That some amongst the persecutors honestly held these views we have no doubt, and for the sake of human nature we are willing to believe that some such excuse must have entered into the minds of most of those who were ready to burn and torture their fellows in the service of the Church, although it seems clear that after a time the basest passions were aroused by this system, and that some among the persecutors were fiends in the guise of human beings.

In the year 1170, at Calaruega, in Old Castile, was born Dominic de Guzman, the man who, as the inventor of the Inquisition and the founder of the order of Dominicans, may be taken to fitliest represent the persecuting spirit of the Church. Prophecies and intimations of his career were received by his mother before his birth—at least, if we are to believe the accounts of the chroniclers. During her pregnancy, the Lady de Guzman is stated to have dreamt that she "whelped a dog, holding a burning torch in his mouth, "wherewith he fired the world." His nativity was accompanied by many signs and portents; earthquakes and meteors, double suns and triple moons, were in after-times believed to have notified to the world at large the extraordinary character of the man-child then born into it. Of course, in all this we see but evidence of the feeling entertained for him by the men who believed these things of him. If they acknowledged him for a Saint, they also felt that he was a terrible kind of Saint.

The family of which Dominic came was one of the most noble in Spain,

and still flourishes there; the Dukes of Medina Sidonia being the eldest branch thereof. His mother, like the women of many of the noble families of Spain, was a devotee, and ere yet the boy was beyond the tender years of infancy, he was taught to rigorously observe the fast-days of the Church, and made to undergo penance at a time when his immature mind could scarcely have been capable of conceiving the nature of a sin. It is a noteworthy fact, as showing the influences under which Dominic was brought up, that all his brothers became either priests or monks;—his very name of Dominic was given to him in honour of the “holy abbot” of Silos. He never knew what the word childhood meant; none of those bright and joyous hours which come to most of us amidst the cares and anxieties of our manhood, when we remember our youth’s golden prime, when life was a holiday, and we knew naught but happiness—none of those could ever have come to Dominic, for none such he ever knew. From his earliest years he was taught to consider amusement sinful; and ere yet he had emerged from the years of boyhood, he was, under the tuition of the archpriest of Gumiel, who was his preceptor, made to employ his time in prayer and serious reading. Life had no sunshine for this man, and if we find in him a saturnine cast of character, shall we wonder? No; and if we are compelled to condemn his actions in after-life, let us, at least, recollect this—that the influences which had been brought to bear upon him in the earlier time were not such as would assist in widening his sphere of vision, or would give him a true theory of life. Of course, it was but the natural result of this man’s youthful training that he should in due course enter the Church, and at the age of twenty-eight we find him accepting a canonry among the canons regular of St. Austin, in the diocese of Osma. Here he was soon distinguished by his extraordinary asceticism; so great were the severities which he caused himself to undergo, that he was reduced to a state of sheer exhaustion, and the bishop was compelled to take measures for making him abate some portion of his severities in order to save his life. In this mode of life he spent some years, until his bishop, being deputed by Alphonso of Castile to go on an embassy into France, he took Dominic with him. This led to the visit of Dominic to the City of Toulouse, where, it appears, he and the bishop lodged in the house of one of the Waldensian heretics. All the fanatic zeal of Dominic was roused by this contact with heresy, and he besought the Pope to allow him to undertake the duty of quelling the heretical opinions prevalent in Languedoc, and, with the Pope’s consent, he became one of the Papal missionaries who undertook that impossible task.

It would appear that it was in a spirit of love that Dominic undertook this work, a work for which scarcely any man could have been less fitted. Brought up, as we have seen, from the earliest age in an unquestioning faith in all that the Church taught; never having had any doubts himself, how could he be capable of arguing with those who had doubted, or able to understand their mental condition? His non-success in converting the heretics of Languedoc seems to have filled him with as much astonishment as mental disquietude; he had no conception of the possibility of a state of mind in which men were willing to choose rather damnation than salvation, and this was what it appeared to him these heretics were doing. Not being able to conceive how men could doubt the authority of the Church, being incapable of arrogating to himself the right to judge of the truth or falsity of her teachings, he could not comprehend how other men could do this. The effect of this, coupled with the constant rejection of the salvation he offered them at the hands of the

Church, is easily understood—from love his feeling would turn to hatred. At first, he looked upon them as mistaken men, who needed only to have the truth preached to them, to recognise the error of their ways; but finding that, although he zealously preached, they still remained in their heresy, he took for obstinacy on their parts, what was, in fact, the result of his incapacity to convince.

The spirit in which he commenced his work, is shown by the celebrated rebuke he administered to the Papal Legates who had been sent into Languedoc to put down the heresy by gentle measures, and whom Dominic met on their way back to Rome arrayed in all the pomp of their office. He asked them of their success, and learning that they had been on a fruitless mission, he said:—"It is not by the display of pomp and power, cavalcades of retainers and richly houseled palfreys, by gorgeous apparel, that the heretics win proselytes; it is by zealous preaching, by apostolic humility, by austerity and by holiness, of seeming it is true, but yet seeming holiness. Zeal must be met by zeal, humility by humility, false sanctity by real sanctity, preaching falsehood by preaching truth." This is what he now undertook to do, and when he found that he too failed, it is not wonderful that he should begin to think other means necessary; if he sought to use them, at least it was not for his own aggrandisement, a thing which cannot be said for others concerned. The fact is he commenced this work in a spirit of fanaticism, capable of love and forgiveness on the one hand, and of hatred and malignity on the other, both surpassing our ordinary experience of men. So we find that when he undertook to preach the Pope's ban of excommunication in Languedoc, he did it thoroughly—calling upon all who desired salvation to abstain from any communication whatsoever with the heretics, to drive them from off their lands, and confiscate their property; while in the case of converts, the penances which he enjoined were of the cruelest kind. And yet he is the man, of whom we are credibly informed that, when appealed to to rescue from the Moors a woman's brother who had been taken by pirates and made a slave, she having appealed to him to do this on the ground that she feared his apostasy and the consequent loss of his soul, 'I have neither gold nor silver,' was his answer, 'but offer me to the Moor in exchange for your brother; I am willing to become a slave in his stead.' This, however, she was not willing to do—but, as Butler piously observes, Dominic's charity was not the less before God. Other instances of a similar charity are related of this man, who has descended to posterity with the evil reputation of having been the cruelest of mankind. It has been said of him, even, that he is the only man who possessed no single virtue. This, however, is a totally false view of Dominic. He was not a villian, but a fanatic; in his character we find the usual paradoxes of fanaticism, kindness, and cruelty, an earnest desire for the eternal welfare of the heretics he would put to death, something which looks very like religion, and actions which bespeak the spirit of the fiend.

Such was the man in whom Innocent III. saw a fit instrument to rouse the sleeping energies of the Church, and initiate an era of spiritual terrorism. From the earliest times of the hierarchical establishment, the theory of the Church had been, that the priest was the only person who was authorised to preach and teach the people. With the growth of episcopal dignity and wealth, however, the priesthood shirked this duty. Thus, throughout those Middle Ages, the Church never spoke to her children by the voice of the preacher, but only in rites and ceremonies. Dominic was the first to recognise the necessity to provide something in the shape of an appeal to the

intelligence of the people. The strength of the various heresies lay in the fact, that they had a large body of preachers, who were ever speaking to listening crowds, and enforcing their doctrines. In the facts, that crowds were ready to listen to this preaching; that men were no longer satisfied with mere ceremonies; and that they demanded, and responded to, an intellectual appeal, we see proof of an altogether new age having commenced. Men were no longer to be led by 'the nose as asses are.' Dominic had the acuteness to see this, and sought to provide a remedy in the shape of an Order of preaching Friars, who should travel among the people and preach to them the doctrines of the Church, even in the same way as the followers of Waldus were wont to preach his heresy to them. We shall see a different working out of this idea in the case of St. Francis of Assisi. Dominic, however, from his experiences in Languedoc, felt that this alone would not be sufficient; that other means were necessary for the suppression of heresy, and, moreover, that by a spiritual police to be established in the shape of his itinerant monks heresy might be nipped in the bud. In the cruelties of the Albigensian Crusade Dominic took but a very small part; nay, seems to have felt that the crusaders themselves were almost worse than the heretics; he was governed by what he took for a religious motive in desiring the punishment of heresy, they by a desire to glut themselves with plunder and pelf at the expense of the heretics. And so to confound the brutal crusaders under Montfort, with Dominic the fanatic, would be to do the latter great injustice; and it is but justice to him to remember this distinction between him and them.

JAS. L. GOODING.

CHARITY AND THE CLAIMS OF THE POOR.

A LECTURE BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from p. 174.)

THE working man has yet to learn the lesson of self-sacrifice. He has suffered by constraint, but has not yet learned how to undertake the pain of self-denial in order to achieve a great object; when he does that his emancipation is certain. For instance, how much we hear about the pressure of low wages and the unfair share of profit paid by the capitalist to the skilled labourer. Say that all the statements are true; what then? Will redress come through the mere recital of the grievance, or can it only come as a consequence of the working classes meeting the man of money with Capital to compete with him upon level ground? The labourers strike for an advance of wages, and gain nothing but misery; if they provided Capital, before striking, their cause would triumph—and they can do this by stopping the tap. We enter a firm in which two thousand skilled labourers are employed at very low wages. Say that, in order to improve their condition, they all resolve that through the next ten years they will abstain from beer and gin, in order, for the purpose of securing justice, to lay the money by. If we suppose the average wages to be thirty shillings a-week, we can also say that the average gin and beer expenditure is four shillings. This is too low a figure for representing the fact of what is actually spent, but I keep to this sum in order to avoid captious objections. Such a weekly sum regularly saved through ten years will, adding interest, amount to One hundred and twenty-five pounds, or, for the whole body, to *Two hundred and fifty thousand*

pounds. When that amount has been saved, we may suppose them again to ask for an increase of wages, which the masters refuse. The strike comes, but without starvation for those who have struck. A few weeks pass by, and, much to the masters' astonishment, without any hungry men finding their way back to beg for employment, as well as without any piteous appeals being made to the "brother workmen of England." The employers, becoming more and more confused by the new state of affairs, convene a meeting, to which a deputation of working men is invited. The question is asked by one of the masters, how they can live so long without work, and then the whole matter is so far explained that the power of the men becomes apparent. They are no longer beggars and starving men, but beings who are strong enough to obtain justice. If the masters refuse to pay what is fair, then the men may either purchase the factory, or found one for themselves with two hundred thousand pounds of their own Capital; and, as a co-operating body, share the profits.

I know, indeed, that many will call this proposal dreamy, but it is nothing of the sort, and, moreover, it represents the only sound principle of progress. It rests upon the great doctrine of self-sacrifice, through which to achieve victory; and the working man who will not act upon that principle does not deserve comfort. Self-sacrifice lies at the foundation of everything noble and honourable in England. Through acting upon its dictates they who compose the middle classes rose from their serfdom. Every fortune now belonging to the denounced moneyed men rests upon industry, self-denial, and caution; and it is impossible to conceive any just reason for the working man being set free from the conditions of progress and elevation which were so rigorously imposed upon others. As I have already urged, our life is governed by certain definite laws, which we cannot control or suspend, and this one, which regulates the conditions of elevation, is as absolute as the rest. To win comfort the right sort of seed must be sown; to achieve justice strength must be developed. The working man who depends upon the moral justice of his claims relies upon a bending reed. It should not be so; but it is so, and in dealing with men we must take them as they are. They will not give one shilling for a job if they can get it done for sixpence. What should be paid is left as a matter for the sentimentalist; as a rule the "practical man" never pays a shilling when he could be served for sixpence. If he did the world would call him a fool. And, living in such a state of society, the working man is bound, by every claim of duty, country, child, and self, to take such steps as will lead to the establishment of what is practically just. Everything short of that will prove but a vexation and weariness of the spirit. He will never be treated justly until he has made himself strong enough to resist wrong, and to cause the iniquity to recoil upon the iniquitous. Others will tell him to rely upon the justice of his cause, but I bid him rely only upon his power to render its justice irresistible.

It must, however, be conceded that, as the working classes are now situated—ignorant and under the tutelage of Custom—there is but little chance of their adopting such a course as that I have indicated, and hence the necessity of considering what can be done in order to put them in the way to better thoughts and habits. What should the good man do for them? There are thousands among the rich and powerful who are heartily desirous of rendering practical assistance; but in what way are they to act so as to achieve the object they have at heart? On one hand, it is urged, that the

best thing they can do is to promote the spread of practical education ; while, on the other, there is an increasing cry for aid to be given to Charitable Institutions. It is unnecessary to do more than discuss these opposite methods ; and there is little reason for believing that any others will be proposed. If the latter should receive our support, then the fruits of good they have produced ought to be made a little more manifest than they have hitherto been ; my own convictions are in favour of the former. We do not need more charity but more justice ; and, if the working classes were properly educated there would be less demand for charitable donations. Not, however, to prejudge the question, I turn to consider these benevolent societies—of course excluding the class which provide for the wants of the sick, the blind, and others who suffer physically, and for whom, including the orphan, it were well if all subscribed with greater liberality ; although there are errors in the management, even of these, which need correcting.

The greatest evil of these charitable institutions lies, not in the amount of hypocrisy, self-complacency, and delusion which they generate among the rich and the official class, but in the improvidence and carelessness which, almost as a necessary consequence of their methods of giving, they create among the poor. It has been wisely provided in Nature that there shall be certain appreciable rewards attached to the performance of our duties, and certain punishments inflicted if we neglect them. These laws being the institutions of God operating in Nature, are the most perfect we can conceive of, and, consequently, there is no wisdom in labouring, as the charitable societies do, to set them aside. A man is punished by Nature who takes no care for to-morrow, but these societies step in, saying, "We will turn aside the punishment by providing for your wants." "Very kind too," says the dullard, who thinks that all pain and suffering is an unmixed evil. But is it so ? That punishment was directed to wise ends which are never reached if its pains are turned aside. The victim of mistaken kindness is deprived of the strength he should have gained. He who has been thus provided for to-day, will think less about taking care to provide for the morrow ; he becomes willing to put his trust in the chapter of accidents, feeling that in a charitable land men will not fail to supply his wants. Thus, by hurrying to turn aside the wise punishment of natural law, although so well-intentioned, these men do their best to blot out the manhood and independence of the victim, for he cannot be otherwise designated than as a victim.

In this way a race of charity-hunters is produced. There are thousands in this metropolis who live upon alms, who know every place where coats and blankets, where bread and similar things are to be obtained, and who visit the institutions in the regular way to share the plunder. I remember reading the evidence of a clergyman, in which he stated that it had been the custom in his church to distribute, among the "poor women" who attended, various sums raised for charitable purposes, and there was a goodly number of "pious "poor women," who attended on "Sacrament Sunday" and, of course, had the gifts. He changed the order of bestowing alms, having resolved to give only to the sick ; but when he told this to his poor communicants they were in high dudgeon, and speedily quitted his church to attend another where something would be given away. They were but the representatives of a class, and of a class whose numbers are increased by the modern method of mechanical charity. Many of them boast to others of their success, and thus induce their neighbours to aid them in their schemes to lie and misrepresent the true state of their case, when the official visitor comes round. Thus they

become involved in the business ; and, seeing how easily a little money is made' they adopt the method, and add to the number of charity leeches.

And who can help it ? People do not administer their own gifts, but send applicants to their pet charity to "have their cases inquired into." In this way they hope to avoid fraud, but it is the best course to promote it. None but the impudent succeed in getting anything from the leading societies. He who can tell a good story and never waver, is pretty sure to succeed ; thus the old hands get most. The honest man and woman who are in distress could tell their story plainly enough to some generous man, who in kindness and patience would sit to listen to them, but cannot get on when they are up "before the "gentlemen" or officials of the society. The official air and manner confuses, appals, and makes them contradict themselves ; when, of course, so vigilant are the mechanical workers, their case is hopeless. Even when soup, bread, or coals, are to be given away, they who are not accustomed to go for it are overcome when the place is reached, and hopelessly they stand waiting until all is gone. The old hands—the well-trained, never fail ; but, as a general rule, they who stood in need and really deserved something go empty away.

Thus the mechanical charity system labours under the double disadvantage of exhausting such funds as the generous have at their disposal, and of not finding out those who should receive a bounty. They are the means of keeping the generous rich away from the suffering poor ; they prevent, through what they receive, many kindly souls from doing good ; and yet, although costing a large sum for working, they are incapable of doing it themselves. Hence it has been my constant advice to every man who has charity to bestow that, as in the performance of some sacred duty towards God and man, he shall seek out a fitting recipient. Give unto him, and mix words of gentle warning, of kindly advice, with the coin. In that way the charitable penny will become fruitful in more ways than one, and there will be no danger of nursing and developing a brood of serpents, who will operate most prejudicially upon the industrial poor. I grant, and am proud to know, that, as a body, the working-classes of England have a spirit above living upon charity ; still there is none the less need for avoiding all practices which result in setting up men as examples before them to show how easy it is, through lying and playing the hypocrite, to obtain a better supply than they can who win bread through labour.

(To be concluded in our next.)

HUMAN FREEDOM AND DIVINE LAW.

SIN and sorrow, love and hate, human passion, and human suffering, are the burthen of the World-tale. In the hurrying crowds of our great cities, in the busy market-places, beneath the humble roof of the villager, and in the kingly palace—wherever man is, proof may be found that human life is a mingled yarn, in which the bright hues of love and joy are ever crossed by the dark-coloured woof of vice and crime, sorrow and sadness. Now in the world around us, in these current months, it is so ; and look where we may in the long records of past time, the same old tale is told. It is dreamers only who speak of Golden Ages when these were not ; history knows of none such. And, were it not that we know of a certainty that there is a profound truth in the saying that "all things work together for good," the contemplation of the records of man's doings and sufferings would be the

saddest possible. The fact that so much of pain and misery, vice and crime, occupy the pages of history, has ever possessed a strange fascination for many minds. Poets have sung their jeremiads, preachers have sermonised, and philosophers have theorised over it, with strange results. If it had been recollected that innocence is not virtue, that it is only through temptation, and the successful resistance thereto, that real virtue comes; if the truth had been borne in mind, that he who finally conquers in the great strife with the evil forces, even though he may have fallen more than once ere he conquered, is a more honourable man, and likelier to be a useful member of society, than he who has never entered on the contest, or been put to the proof, juster views on this matter would have occupied the pages of moralists, and wiser legislation would have appeared in our statute books. Wise teaching and efforts at reformation would have governed our jurisprudence, instead of the organised systems of vengeance, which, too frequently, have passed for justice. Our preachers, too, would have had more of the spirit of Christ, who came to call sinners to repentance, and who never thought to trouble himself to preach sermons to the righteous. Nor would the wild theories, as to freewill and necessity, human depravity, and Divine free grace, have found such ardent supporters, or wide acceptance as they have done—under a mistaken view of human life, and God's moral government.

It is here that the popular theology and the atheistic doctrine of necessity have a common meeting point, and are both equally immoral in their tendency and teaching. The doctrine of necessity—whether openly, and in so many words, or impliedly, and as a necessary corollary to the principles on which it is based, matters nought to the argument—teaches that every act and every motive of man is but the necessary result of circumstances; that the human being acts thus or thus, because he is obliged by the governing fate which presides over his life to act so, and not otherwise; that, in fact, men are not free agents, and that freewill is a figment of the imagination, and not a fact of nature. The popular theology teaches, in its doctrine of universal hereditary depravity, the impossibility of goodness on the part of the human race; man, the "son of Adam," is tainted with the "original sin of his first parents," and all his virtues are but as "filthy rags," all his strivings after goodness and truth are "vain, and of no account," and if he would be saved he must remain the passive recipient of the mercy of a capricious God. The result of the teaching in both cases is the same—it strikes at the root of human self-respect and self-reliance—man, no longer free to work out his own salvation, is the slave either of an unrelenting fate, or a vengeful Deity.

The doctrines are both equally false. Man is free—to choose the evil, and eschew the good, but if he do so, by an unerring law, in the operation of which the love of God is as conspicuous as in aught else, he suffers therefore. Sin ever brings its merited punishment, and its necessary compensation. Man is free—to do good, and abstain from evil, and in the results he finds an exceeding great reward. Man's virtue is not "filthy rags," in the sight of the Great Father, who looks with approbation upon the good deeds of His child. He has not surrounded man with circumstances which conquer him, but has given to each and all the power to conquer circumstances, and work out their own salvation. Were it not so—where would man's responsibility be? and why should the actions of men be condemned because they are evil, or applauded when good? Nero and Socrates, the evil and the good, would stand on the same footing—the example and the warning in either case would be lost, and history have no teaching for us.

God's moral government, by means of an ever-working law, is quite compatible with man's perfect freedom. God has instituted certain laws which, if obeyed, lead to happiness and wisdom, and conduct man by progressive steps ever onward and upward; but He has left man free to obey or disobey. With disobedience come misery, darkness, and ignorance, as the just punishment of the disobedience; yet not a punishment merely, but a teaching too. Out of the wisdom gained by and through this teaching, come attempts to amend the evil, and by degrees the effects of the former disobedience are removed; and so the ultimate result is the progress to further which the law was designed. Thus God's moral government is vindicated; and whether in the evils resulting from disobedience, or the reward reaped as the consequence of obedience, God still stands as the Father of humanity, desiring man's happiness and leading him onward to perfection; and out from the depths of past centuries comes the very Voice of God in history, to teach us that by earnest endeavour to find the true and the right path, even in the midst of thick darkness, men have been able to find it, and that when they entered upon it and began to work in the right direction, they have had the law of God to aid them in their work.

JAS. L. GOODING.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF SOLOMON.

(Continued from p. 176.)

THE same kind of doubts are called forth by the accounts which have been furnished of the number of men employed in the work of building. It is set forth that Solomon applied to Hiram, the King of Tyre, for both men and materials—cunning men and cedar wood. This king had been friendly to David, and Solomon sagaciously urged the old friendship as a reason in favour of compliance with his request. "As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build him an house to dwell therein, even so deal with me. Behold I build an house to the name of the Lord my God. Send me, now, therefore, a man cunning to work in gold, in silver, and in brass, and in iron, and in purple, and crimson, and blue, and that can skill to grave with the cunning men that are with me in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom David my father did provide."* These were men formerly obtained by David from Hiram; for the Hebrew people were sadly defective in mechanical and artistic skill. Solomon asked also for timber, and men to hew it in the forests of Lebanon. "Send me also cedar trees, fir trees, and algum trees, out of Lebanon: for I know that thy servants are skilled to cut timber in Lebanon; and, behold, my servants shall be with thy servants, even to prepare me timber in abundance: for the house which I am about to build shall be wonderful great."† Then follows the offer of payment for the labour, in the form of measures of wheat, barley, oil, and wine, the natural products of Palestine. Hiram consented, for the heathen were good natured people, and sent back a letter to Solomon, saying how the wood should be forwarded. "We will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need, and we will bring it to thee in floats by sea to Joppa, and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem." Thus the wood was to be floated down the coast to Joppa. Solomon now numbered the Canaanites who were still in the land, and he appointed 70,000 of them to act as bearers of wood, and 80,000 to be hewers of wood in the mountain, and over all he placed 3,600 overseers. It seems, too, that Solomon raised a levy of 30,000 Israelites to cut wood in Lebanon, but these

* 2 Chronicles, ii. 7.

† Ibid, 8-9.

were sent in courses of 10,000 per month.* They remained one month at Lebanon and two months at home, so that their work was lighter than that of the Canaanite serfs. If we put these all together, we have 163,000 men constantly at work preparing the materials for building this temple, without reckoning the men of Tyre and Sidon who were employed. How they were fed so far away from home it is hard to say, and indeed viewing the whole proceeding by the light of modern "hewing at Lebanon," we should say it never was as there stated. Probably, however, most of these were of the number engaged in hewing and shaping the great stones which were to be wrought into this great building, and thus their supplies and labour could be better accounted for.

We are informed that the building of the temple, with the completion of all its embellishments, &c., occupied seven years. It was built of stone, lined with cedar, and overlaid with gold. "And the house when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building." A fact which has afforded the text for innumerable milk-and-water—or strangely ridiculous, discourses. Many honourable men have seen marvellous meanings in the fact that no hammer rang—that no noise was heard; and, indeed, according to them, the purity and sanctity of the house would have been completely destroyed had any nail been driven home by the hammer. And yet is it not strange that nails, under such circumstances, were used at all? We can understand wood and stone being fully prepared to joint together, but the use of nails is altogether valueless if they are merely to fit into holes already prepared; seeing that, without being forced in—driven home—they cannot impart strength.

This point, however, is not very important—much more important is it to learn in what form the temple was built. And here we come upon a world of contradictions. No two writers are agreed either about its form or the arrangement of its courts, and this great diversity results from the contradictory statements in "Kings" and "Chronicles"; but considerable light has been thrown upon the subject by the recent study of Egyptian temples, so that it now seems quite clear, not only that this so much-vaunted temple was a copy from the Egyptian, but also that it was so small that it cannot be spoken of as in any sense equal to the Egyptian. To satisfy my hearers that this statement is justified by facts, I shall here quote from Dr. Kitto's description: "Like the Egyptian temples, that of Solomon was composed of three principal parts. The porch, or pronaos, the depth of which was equal to half of its length. Next to this was a large apartment, designated the Sanctuary, or Holy Place,—forty cubits long by twenty wide. This was the *naos*. And lastly, beyond this lay the third or innermost chamber, a square of twenty cubits, called the Holy of Holies, answering to the *sekos* of Egyptian temples, where was placed the ark with its hovering cherubim, and where also the most sacred objects of their religion were placed by the Egyptians. The arrangements of the external buildings, with the different courts, also coincided with the arrangements of Egyptian temples, as described by Strabo, and as they are still to be seen in the existing remains of ancient temples in that country. The Holy of Holies, or inner sanctuary, was divided from the rest of the temple by a partition of cedar, in the centre of which was a pair of folding-doors of olive wood, very richly carved with palm-trees, and open flowers, and cherubim,—the whole overlaid with gold. A like pair of folding-doors, of grander dimensions, also overlaid with gold, embossed in rich patterns of cherubim, and knops, and open flowers, formed the outer entrance. Both pairs of doors were furnished with massive pins of gold (not 'hinges' which were not known), turning in holes made in the lintel and the threshold. These were, in Egypt, often of metal, and some of bronze have been found, and exist in cabinets of antiquities. The door forming the entrance to the most Holy Place was left open, and the space covered, as is usual in the East, by a magnificent veil or curtain. It may be asked, how the interior received light, seeing that the storeys of chambers occupied the sides? But these buildings did not reach the top, and in the upper part of the wall, between the flat

* 1 Kings, v. 13-14.

roof of the chambers and the top of the wall of the main building, was a row of narrow windows which lighted up the interior. The floor of the temple was formed of planks of fir, covered with gold. The inside walls and the flat ceiling were lined with cedar beautifully carved, representing cherubim and palm-trees, clusters of foliage and open flowers, among which, as in Egypt, the lotus was conspicuous; and the whole interior was so overlaid with gold, that neither wood nor stone was anywhere to be seen, and nothing met the eye but pure gold, either plain, as in the floor, or richly chased, as on the walls, and, as some think, with precious stones in the representations of flowers, and other enrichments. This style of ornamentation is quite Oriental, and certainly ancient. The examples of it which have come under our notice, show that precious stones may be applied with greater advantage than is usually supposed to internal decoration, and satisfy us that they might, with truly rich and beautiful effect, be employed in this instance in setting off the costly enchasement in gold. That precious stones were employed in the interior decoration appears from 2 Chron. iii. 6, which expressly states that Solomon 'garnished the house with precious stones.' And we know that David provided for the work, and his nobles contributed, 'all manner of precious stones.*' It seems that even the inside of the porch was lined with gold. This front part of the building was also enriched with two pillars of brass, one called Jachin and the other Boaz—which, being cast entire, seem to have been regarded as masterpieces of Hiram's art. They exhibited the usual proportions of Egyptian columns, being five-and-a-half diameters high. Their use has been disputed. Some think that they stood as detached ornaments in front of or in the porch—like the two obelisks which we often see before Egyptian temples, while others suppose that they contributed to support the entablature of the porch. Their height and dimensions are favourable to this opinion, as are the analogies afforded by Egyptian buildings, in which two pillars are seen supporting the entablature of the pronaos, resembling the pillars on which rested the porch of the Philistine temple Samson overthrew."†

All was after the Egyptian style, and if it be true that Solomon did really build a temple, may it not be that it was rather in accordance with the thoughts of his Egyptian wife? She was ready to aid, and could secure men to instruct her husband. The theory of God having been the Architect is abandoned by all save the ignorant; and there is very little reason for doubting that the model came out of the land of bondage.

It remains for us to notice the peculiar ornaments, the petty size, and the general dimensions of this wonder of the world. Undoubtedly, and entirely independent of the commandment to make to themselves no likeness of things above or below, the walls were ornamented with Lions, Cherubim, and Oxen. Oxen, too, were in great request to support the large tank of brass, reminding us of the bull Apis, so highly venerated in Egypt. What relation had oxen to the Jehovah worship? Then the Cherubim in various forms, either upon the walls or as independent figures—these were copies from the Egyptian and the Syrian. The Cherubim, as described by Ezekiel, was a bull, a lion, an eagle, and a man, and he distinctly declares that this was the form of the Cherubim of the temple. Look at the winged figures upon either the Egyptian, Persian, Babylonian, or Assyrian sculptures, and you see at once the Cherubim of Solomon. He had two large ones made with their wings extended so that the wings of both touched, and spread over 20 cubits. They were 17½ feet high, and undoubtedly were noble figures. They stood in the Holy of Holies, and it was between these two, over the mercy seat, that, according to the Hebrew theory, God used to make His appearances. And other Cherubim were carved upon the walls, with many natural history ornaments. How was this? Was Solomon, as before hinted, ignorant of the command of Moses not to make graven images or the likeness of anything in heaven or earth? Certainly the commandment was not observed, and the pious Jews relate that it was here that the wise king turned aside. They say that by introducing these into the temple, he paved the way for his after idolatry. But they overlook the

* 1 Chronicles, xxix. 2, 3.

† Kitto. Daily Bible Illustrations, vol. i. p. 59. And this is an orthodox book.

fact, that not only did God not express any dissatisfaction with these "graven images," but He gave His approval to all that had been done by appearing to consecrate it. The relation given both in "Kings" and "Chronicles" is to the effect that, when the temple was consecrated, when the Ark was deposited in the Holy of Holies, the glory of the Lord filled the house. The words are: "Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house. And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house. And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever."*

There was no rebuke uttered about the carved images, none relating to the wickedness of defiling the House of the Lord by setting up such things as He had so strictly prohibited, which is utterly unaccountable if the theory be correct that in this reign the nation actually possessed the supposed laws of Moses. The facts are that nothing like the law of Moses was known unto Solomon. The people were satisfied to have God dwelling amongst them. Thus, as in the old time, Jehovah in glory became visible unto them. They could not look, for the blaze was so strong. Shall we gaze full upon the Sun-God and conquer his brightness, or into the mirror of gold whereon the sun shines?

But the actual dimensions of this famous temple, considering all which has been said of it, form the most astonishing fact in the whole history. Hearing and reading so much about it, we are led to conclude that in size and splendour it must have surpassed all other Egyptian, Syrian, Babylonian, and other ancient temples; whereas we find, when we come with rod and line to measure it, that it would not in Egypt have been looked upon as more than an appendage to some temple of large dimensions; it was altogether too petty for them to have called it a temple. We learn that the building was a rectangle "sixty cubits long in the clear from east to west, and twenty cubits wide from north to south."† That is, it was at the extreme 105 feet long and 35 feet wide, so that the majority of our parish churches are much larger. As to the cathedrals, they all so far surpass it that they may not be suggested in comparison. And hence, again, we are compelled to ask, if it be possible to believe in the vast expenditure set forth over a building so petty, and, as contrasted with other temples, insignificant. The explanation I gave at first fully meets the case. A temple was built by Solomon, and in his tinsel style of splendour: the onlookers called that solid gold which was only gilt, and thus an idea, a false idea, of the real value was spread abroad. Then came the division of the kingdom, and, as a natural result, greater pride in the possession of the temple. Then came the captivity, captivity after captivity, desolation after desolation, in which the people sat them down to tell the story of their former glory. Each telling added somewhat to the bulk of the story; for, as all experience shows, although there may be no set desire to exaggerate, there is a tendency that way which cannot be destroyed. The Hebrews, when they came out of their captivity, were in no sense fitted for taking a reasonable view of the matter. Had they done so, then we should never have heard or read the story of the temple as told in the Chronicles. For clearly, taking the actual size of the building, it would not have been possible for them to work so much wealth into such a small compass. Had the entire temple been built of solid gold, the alleged amount would not have been exhausted, and the silver would have built a wall round it.

* 2 Chron. vii. 1-3.

† Ibid. iii.

(To be continued.)

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THE INCOMPETENT BISHOPS, AND THE ESSAYS AND REVIEWS.

AMONG the numerous wants of Englishmen, it is scarcely possible to single out one more glaring than this, the want of "A dissertation upon the use and value of Bishops." Upon the Continent, we are universally taunted with being "a severely practical people;" it is said that we "are resolved upon keeping no more cats than will catch mice," and we are spoken of as being "utterly unable to discover the value of anything which does not bring its pennyworth of profit." The taunt proves the ignorance of those who resort to its use; for it would be difficult to find a nation in which more men are fed at the public cost, yielding no profit to the toiling millions who feed them, than are bountifully fed and richly clothed in England.

We single out for present examination the Bench of Bishops, and inquire what good they do?—what profit they yield?—what honour they confer?—wherein they promote either the cause of knowledge, progress, peace, brotherhood, or true religion? It has been pithily said in their defence, that any fool can cast a stone at a philosopher, and that the success of a public man is sure to create numberless enemies. Let all this be freely granted, but does it not also stand unquestionable, that the philosopher must produce fruit which will make manifest the folly of the fool, and that the successful man must, in his works, prove himself to be superior to what his enemies have declared. Have the Bishops done so? Where are the proofs of Episcopal wisdom?—Where the record of those works whose beauty and nobleness exalt our Church Dignitaries above the assaults of their enemies?—In what sense can they be said to show themselves in the character of men who make us wiser, nobler, or freer? Their best friends have sought in vain for such fruit.

A remarkable illustration of their incompetence is now before the world. A volume has been published which is composed of Essays written by members of the Church—by leading ecclesiastics: in which, not only are the common Creeds of Christendom touched with an unsparing hand, but the Scriptures themselves are proven to be quite other than the literary works of God, and utterly unworthy of the honour conferred upon them. This is done in no vulgar or incompetent manner, but calmly, and upon sufficient evidence which is therein

adduced. The authors of the Essays are alike scholars and gentlemen; they are lovers of truth, being particularly earnest in their defence of religion in its truest sense; and while, upon the one hand, they are outspoken in favour of what they know to be the actual verity, they are in no sense unjust to the men of old—they deal neither harshly nor uncandidly with the ancients, who, innocently and honestly, proclaimed the contrary of that which is now to be received. The volume, however, is nothing more than a combination of truths which have been previously received in an isolated form. We engage to point out in various modern, but generally received, religious works, every denounced statement which is found in this volume. They have all been made before and passed current. The flowers were all known to be flourishing in the clerical critical garden, and all that these authors have done is to pluck and form them into a bouquet, which in that form has proved to be unpleasant to episcopal nostrils.

The book has been denounced by Bishops and Clergy alike; but in that it has only shared the common fate of all good works, and if it promises any larger measure of freedom and happiness to mankind, they are bound by precedent to denounce it. As a rule, the best book of an age is invariably the most bitterly denounced by the Clergy, taken as a class. All great works contain new embodiments of truth, and are signs of progress; but, as the clergy are never convinced of the need of change in any other direction than that of increasing their own numbers, especially the number of Bishops, or enlarging their pecuniary resources, there is little reason for anticipating they will ever generously and loyally accept a new truth, until it has been too firmly established for their resistance to be any longer of avail.

Thus, it is only in accordance with the common course of things for them to raise a cry against the Essays and Reviews. There is no novelty about it, and it is equally in accord with the general practice, that they should censure deeply without furnishing any logical or tangible reason for doing so. They rest upon Authority divorced from Reason, and the cause thereof is palpable enough. As a class they are inefficient men, and utterly incompetent to disprove the statements which they officially repudiate. When Columbus stood before the Council, called to examine his proposals, the ecclesiastical portion rejected every one of his statements as being unorthodox, and, although they were too ignorant to furnish even the show of argument against him, they combined their forces joyfully enough to brand him as a deceiver of the people of God.

The same, or even a more bitter course was pursued in England in relation to Harvey, when he announced the fact that the blood circulates through the heart and body. The Clergy were totally ignorant of every fact connected with the subject, they knew neither the old nor the new theory, but their incompetence only made them the more bitter in their denunciations. So, also, with the discoveries in astronomy, geology, general physics, and those connected with the sanitary laws and the origin of diseases. They knew nothing of the facts, and would not attempt to learn: still, with unpardonable audacity, and in the name of God, they undertook to denounce, in sermon and essay, the scientific men who proclaimed them.

Thus, as history clearly testifies, had society been left to ecclesiastical rule, it would still be sitting in darkness and misery, subject alike to the horrors of city fever, the terrors of an Inquisition, the weakness of superstition, and the incompetence of ignorance; the rack would even now be a favoured means of mercy in daily use, the faggots would still be piled round

the men of independent thought in Smithfield, and all those fearful scenes of horror associated with the Middle Ages, which are now so painful even in the reading, would form component parts of our national daily life. It could not be otherwise were the Clergy set up as our absolute guides, in place of that Reason which God gave us to serve in that capacity; for, in virtue of their official dignity, they presuppose themselves to know all which can be known, and, consequently, are ever found to be in opposition to those ideas which are suggested by the intelligent explorer and inquirer into the order and meaning of Nature. They must denounce him as a knave, or admit themselves to have been less wise than was presupposed.

But according to the statement of the Bishops, these Essays "contain" opinions, calmly and dispassionately enunciated, which tend to do the work "of the sceptic," and the Bishop of Ripon, taking that view of the matter, told the Church Aid Society at Bradford, that he considered it furnished cause of thankfulness to God, that, without one dissentient voice, the Bishops of the Church of England, to a man, had pronounced an emphatic condemnation of the infamous and blasphemous opinions propounded in "these Essays and Reviews." We do not hesitate to intimate plainly, that—without noticing his want of charity, and gentlemanly feeling—the said Bishop must have been speaking for once without a book, or that he is totally ignorant of the contents of the work he denounces. He may have read it, but reading does not involve the power of understanding. He understands it not. For, above all, it is not a book of *opinions*, but of facts, and therein lies the sting. Had it been no more than a Bishop's sermon—merely a compound of borrowed sentences illogically arranged, and powerless to work changes—or nothing more than a compound of opinions unbacked by conclusive evidence, there is every reason for declaring it would have had but a short shrift before its final execution.

This book would never have gained notoriety, were it composed of a set of opinative essays; that which gives force to its contents, is the fact that the authors are chary of drawing conclusions, but clever in placing the "evidence" in such a form as to compel the reader to arrive at conclusions not favourable to the existing standards of orthodoxy. They have culled from various works, and made excellent use of a number of facts which are unimpeachable; and the fact is, that the clergy, as a body, are too little informed upon the subjects, to be able to decide how justly or unjustly the selection has been made and arranged. The Bishop of Ripon can with perfect ease cast a stone at him who draws conclusions from Persian, Hindu, and Egyptian History; but what is required to lend force to the stone, is that sort of evidence which would prove him to possess a sufficient critical knowledge of the history to justify him in pronouncing an opinion. Doubtless, this Reverend Father in God views these histories, as well as the various scientific facts used in the same volume, with the most perfect contempt; but, fortunately, as it lies not in his power to create, so is it out of his power to destroy them. The less he knows about them, the more contemptuously will he think and speak. And should he succeed in inducing society to close its eyes to the truth, the success will be merely temporary; he will triumph to the extent of shrouding its members a little longer in a lie; he will succeed in keeping them a little longer in submissive tutelage, content to feed upon a barren moor of episcopal platitudes; but eventually the truth he would hide will gain currency and establish its triumph.

Evidently, the Bishops have arrived at the conclusion, that it is their

sole business to denounce, and not to argue or instruct; they are to curse the authors of the Essays, not to demonstrate the unsoundness of their facts. But it ought to be known in these times of enlightenment, even by Bishops, that an ounce of proof is worth more than a ton of denunciation. They ought by this time to have learnt that the best way to convince the reasonable part of the nation of the Essayists being correct, is for the whole hierarchy to denounce them, seeing that their Lordships, as a rule, have always been found upon the opposition side when a new truth was asserted. We do not say that this should be the course of reasoning, because it is our firm conviction, that, by accident, a wise, honest, candid, innocent-minded, and practically learned man might be placed upon that bench, and, consequently, that there is a remote chance of a Bishop actually and publicly approving of some new truth before it has become the conviction of all minds. The possibility of such an event is not to be rudely repudiated. Still the fact will stand, that, as the cry of a tory against any new measure introduced into Parliament furnishes *a priori* evidence of its being a liberal, wise, and progressive measure, so the cry of the Bishops against a book, supplies the same kind of proof of its being a sound and good one, and, rightly or wrongly, there are thousands in England who will not consider any other evidence to be necessary.

Will they undertake to answer these Essays? If not, then, why are they appointed as Bishops? They are the "chief shepherds," and by their own showing, wolves have broken in to slay the flocks placed under their charge,—are they ready to protect them by doing battle with the wolves? If not, then, why are they drawing the pay of shepherds? The Archbishop of Canterbury expressed the hope that some Churchman would arise to answer the Essays, and we presume he meant some needy curate, whose time is neither occupied in feasting nor in counting his annual gains out of the "Lord's Treasury," for no pluralist or hierarch is at all likely to do so. Why does the Archbishop fail his flock in the hour of need? He is the chief of the Church, why, then, should he wait for some poorly-paid, half-starved curate to do his work, while he is himself mean enough in soul to draw the pay and wear the honour? If he be the wisest and best of the Clergy, as the theory of his exaltation declares him to be, then, who can be so fit as himself—assisted as he would readily be by other wise men—to write an answer? And if he be not the wisest, then, why is he Archbishop?

Obviously, the episcopal system must be a farce if the united Bench cannot furnish a conclusive answer to these Essays. Let the Churchman say what he will by way of apology, he must needs confess that, by their own consent, the hierarchs of the Church must be dubbed as incompetent noodles. The Archbishop of Canterbury told the deputation which waited upon him with the petition, that he had no doubt, "every one of the Essays would be shown to be a frivolous and answerable publication." Be it so, and it will follow that, as these Shepherds are waiting for some competent man to answer "frivolous" Essays, themselves being unable to do it, they have thereby voted themselves to be unworthy the lawn they wear. If the Essays are dangerous, and likely to lead to the ruin of souls, the Shepherds should take steps to preserve their flocks; and if the task be an easy one, how great is their sin that they have not performed it—how great should be their shame if they are unable to do so!

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XIII.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE INQUISITION.

EVEN after all the efforts made for the extirpation of heresy in Languedoc, the Church still feared, and doubtless not without reason, that many who remained had merely disguised their heretical opinions under a seeming submission. That the Church did not believe in the efficacy of her work of blood is shown by the order made at the Council of Toulouse: 'That the bishops should appoint in all the communities, in city and country, a priest, and with him two or three, or if necessary, several laymen, of good standing and character, and bind them by oath carefully and faithfully to *ferret out the heretics*, to search suspected houses, subterranean chambers, and other hiding places, all which should be destroyed; to lodge as speedily as possible with the archbishop, bishop, or the lord or magistrate of the province, an information against detected heretics, their patrons and concealers, after first taking every precautionary measure to prevent their escape, in order that they might be brought to condign punishment. That in every commune all males, from the age of fourteen and upwards, and females from the age of twelve, should abjure all doctrines in hostility to the Church of Rome, also swear that they would preserve the Catholic faith, and persecute and conscientiously make known all heretics according to their ability.'

That this oath might be taken by every individual, it was further ordered, 'That the names of all the men and women in each parish should be recorded; and if any person should be absent at the time of the taking thereof, and did not take it within fourteen days after his return, he should be put down as suspected of heresy.' This order was intended to apply only to Languedoc. But Dominic designed a wider field than that; nothing less in short than the entire of Europe. He himself was appointed by the Pope to carry out his ideas, giving them such form as he pleased; the results were the Order of Dominican Friars and the Inquisition. Dominic must therefore be looked upon as the first Inquisitor-General; and throughout the centuries of spiritual terrorism which followed, the Dominicans have been identified with the exercise of inquisitorial functions.

The real origin of the Inquisition is therefore found in the fear entertained by the Church that the work done by Simon de Montfort—awfully complete as it was—was not sufficient for the suppression of heresy. The danger to the priestly authority of the revolt in Languedoc had been so great that it was felt to be necessary to provide against a repetition. And so successful were the measures taken that for more than two centuries the Papal Despotism and apparent power of the Church were at their height. Throughout those two centuries the inquisitorial system was continually receiving improvements at the hands of the Dominicans, and what it was in its completeness may be read in the annals of Spain, although, let it be remembered, that the tortures and horrible ingenuity displayed by Inquisitors in after ages, were never practised or even imagined by Dominic, who, though ready to put heretics to death, never, so far as we know, resorted to the torture to induce them to confess or recant. The system of terrorism was yet only in its infancy.

The first field of Dominic's inquisitorial labours was Languedoc, and here, associated with sixteen others (who formed the nucleus from which the Order of Dominicans was afterwards developed), he went to work 'to discover, convert, and arraign before the Ecclesiastical Courts all persons sus-

'pected of heresy.' At first he and his companions did not constitute an independent tribunal, but were obliged to seek the intervention of the bishop; this process was, however, found to be too tedious, and on Dominic's representation, he was invested with plenary powers to judge and convict all heretics. During four years that he remained, large numbers of heretics were condemned, and then he left, despairing of curing the evil; which was again taken in hand by Simon and his Crusaders. After the final closing of the war, the Inquisition was established in every part of the South of France; where (so effectual were its operations) it languished after a few years for want of heretics to condemn. It is not until 250 years after that this dread tribunal becomes prominent on the page of history in Spain, and later still, in the time of the Reformation, in Portugal; although its influence is perceptible throughout Europe during all the time.

Neither Dominic, Innocent III., nor the Council of Toulouse, however, must be looked upon as having invented, in the Inquisition, a system similar to which nothing had ever been before seen. Looking back, through the centuries, we find that in the age in which the Western Roman Empire was fast crumbling to decay, the clergy of Gaul and Italy used the Imperial Courts as a means of inquiring into and punishing heresy in the shape of Arianism, and the first hint of the Inquisition which we have in history, is traced to the proceedings of the Imperial Courts in the fifth century.* Again, in the eighth century, when the Germans were undergoing at the hands of the Church and the Franks their forcible conversion to Christianity; we find that the most docile of the converted barbarian chiefs took the title of Counts, to execute against their brothers the orders of the bishops; and secret tribunals were instituted throughout the country to pursue backsliders, and severely teach them the gravity of the vows so often taken, and so frequently violated.† If we could but get the history of the spread of Christianity in those early times, when "the priest reigned, converted, judged and securely pursued "his murderous education of the barbarian," really written out; how different our popular ideas of what Christianity and Christian missionaries did for the nations would be.

In the secret tribunals of the eighth century, we find the origin of that strange secret Court of mediæval Germany, the *Velungericht*, the terrible secrecy of whose proceedings, and the awful and sudden punishments inflicted by which, struck awe and terror into the wild and lawless barons of the Feudal Age. During the darkness of the night, the citation to appear was made by nailing to the outer gate of the castle, or dwelling where the criminal lived, the funereal emblem of the invisible tribunal. The stoutest turned pale at the sight, for escape was impossible, and if the citation were unheeded, an arrow from unseen hands, or the dagger of the midnight executioner, would effect the sentence of this mysterious Court. But few attempted to elude the call. The proceedings of this tribunal were conducted at midnight, before darkly masked judges, and the condemned wretch was put to death without appeal, and in the silence and darkness of the night. The only intimation given of what had befallen him, was by a sign, which men knew too well, and the whisper of terror passed around, conveying the intelligence. A strange tribunal, but effectual for a wild and lawless time. In its proceedings, we see the prototype of the Spanish Inquisition.

After his departure out of Languedoc Dominic retired to Rome, where he spent the remainder of his life in laying the foundation of that great Order

* Michelet, i. p. 49.

† *Ibid.*, p. 80.

of Friars which bears his name, and which, identified as it became with all the persecutions of succeeding centuries, ever active as the police of the Church, and especially as Inquisitors earning the hate of mankind, has tended to cast a reflex light of a lurid and baleful character upon the aims and career of Dominic. But justice demands that the evil reputation of the Order should not be allowed to bias our views of the founder. He died at Rome, on the 6th August, 1221; and was canonized not long after. If we take the account of Butler, or the Bollandists, or many other Catholic authorities, we should agree that this was an honour he deserved for his real piety, and great goodness. Dominic was, in truth, an enthusiast; a man who worked not so much for the Pope, or the Church, as for a certain ideal which he had set up;—a fanatic, who in pursuit of this ideal would have walked through seas of blood, would a great deal rather have been without the blood, but if the death of men—thousands or millions, was of no importance in the estimate—were necessary to keep the Church of God pure, then, as a sad necessity, he would put them to death; and Dominic would have been willing himself to die for any one amongst them. Such men—men in whom, to speak plainly, religion has become madness—the Church has been ever ready to use for her own purposes; and if misery and crime resulted, let us not so much blame these men, as the gigantic system of Priestcraft set up by the Church.

During the years which followed this Albigensian Crusade, the power of the Papacy rose to its height. But the blood of the heretics was not spilt in vain. The crimes of the priesthood cried to heaven for vengeance, and, though long delayed, a day of reckoning came. A spirit was already alive in Europe which oceans of blood could not drown; which tortures, and racks, and thumb-screws could not sear; which was above the might of the Church, with all its spiritual thunders, and the aid of the 'secular arm' to boot. Noble-souled men successively arose in Europe to carry on the work of opposition to the priestly despotism, which sought first to stupify and brutalise mankind into ignorance and superstition, and afterwards to coerce them into submission. The murdered Albigenses rose again, and yet again, as the centuries rolled; in Bohemia, in Germany, in France, there remained, after all that priestly butchers could effect in the way of persecution, the remembrance and tradition, and also the spirit which had actuated these earliest Reformers, which needed only another impulse to be called into active life. That impulse was destined to come from England. While in the mountain fastnesses of the Alps, in the Swiss valleys, and the valleys of Piedmont, the followers of Peter Waldus were ever found, and called forth a series of persecutions unparalleled in atrocity, which even as late as our own Cromwell's time induced his righteous protest, and inspired the mighty song of Milton:—

"Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie bleaching on the Alpine mountains cold.
In thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold,
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, who rolled
Mother with infant down the rock. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred-fold"

JAS. L. GOODING.

LIFE AND DOCTRINES OF KHOUNG-FOU-TSZE (CONFUCIUS).

§ 11.—LAST DAYS OF CONFUCIUS.

THE latter days of Confucius were far from being so joyous as he appears to have deserved, but having mixed so much in public life, as a statesman and a teacher, it was scarcely to be expected that he could pass away without his share of trouble. He was saddened by observing that men had not become as virtuous and noble as he desired to see them; he was daily brought into contact with those who were hunting after more than their proper share of the good things of life, and whose only qualification lay in the impudence with which they pressed their imaginary claims. Others who had professed the doctrines he taught, were but too ready to turn aside, in order to make immediate profit, so that frequently he fell into a semi-fit of despair, as one who feared lest the Right would never properly triumph.

It was his habit, when on a journey, to alight from his carriage to walk and talk with his disciples. The fifth year before his death he paid his last visit to the Imperial Court, and, while on the road, walking with Tsze-loo, near the foot of a mountain, on the Hwang-ho, in order to observe the state of the paths which served as communications across the hills, Confucius stopped, and desired his companion to notice a pheasant quietly picking some corn, without being disturbed at their approach. "Alas!" said he, with a sigh, "that parts once so frequented should now be deserted, and that a single pheasant should be left to pick up all this corn!" Tsze-loo was puzzled to understand this. "These deserted grains of corn," added the philosopher, "are a type of the 'sound doctrine' and its present condition; 'the pheasant represents my situation.'" This he repeated thrice. When he rejoined his party, they noticed a change in his aspect, and inquired the reason. Confucius took his lute, and sang an ode, which he had just composed, wherein he compares his doctrine to a beautiful flower, whose delicate scent and fragile stem are destroyed by the rough blast.*

But it was not thus destroyed; rather it required his death as a means of promoting its more active growth; and that was soon to come. Still, and even at the last, the old man fired up and resumed his business as a teacher, precisely as though he could know neither fatigue nor weakness. He accepted an invitation to revisit his native state, and there he delivered his last lectures.

In the neighbourhood of the capital, there were some eminences, formerly used for sacrifices, and now resorted to by idlers, as promenades. Near these natural altars, which had fallen into decay, tents or pavilions were built, to which the name of *tan* ('hillock for sacrifice') was given, to perpetuate the remembrance of the ancient custom. Confucius made one or other of these pavilions his lyceum; one of them, to which he resorted most frequently, was called 'apricot hill,' because it adjoined an orchard of that fruit. This building is still kept up, under the same name. Here it was chiefly that, surrounded by his disciples, he delivered lectures on the King, music, and ceremonies, and prepared his works for publication. His followers soon amounted to three thousand, a very few of whom were familiar with more than his morals, the chief topic of his discourses. His disciples,

* This is given by F. Amlot, in his *Life of Confucius*.

who were in a condition to expound his precepts respecting the ritual, music, and the liberal arts, were seventy-two in number, twelve of whom* were his ordinary companions, the depositories of his thoughts, and the witnesses of all his actions; to them he minutely explained his doctrines, and charged them with their propagation after his death, assigning to each the office which he thought most adapted to his inclination and capacity.

Yan-hwuy was his favourite disciple, who, in his opinion, had attained the highest degree of moral perfection.† In the presence of some of his fellow-disciples (B.C. 484), Confucius addressed him in terms of great affection, denoting that he relied mainly upon him for the accomplishment of the work which he would leave unfinished. This prospect, like others, was doomed to be frustrated. Yan-hwuy died a short time after, to the great grief of Confucius, as well as of his fellow-disciples, who deplored the loss of a friend: the Chinese still regard him as a model of virtue. This shock was followed by the death of Tsze-loo, another of the twelve, to whom he was especially attached, who (characteristically) strangled himself in order not to survive a degrading insult. These losses, added to that of his son three years after, and to the obstacles his doctrines encountered, insensibly detached Confucius from the world. Though approaching his sixty-ninth year, his health was sound, and he still pursued his literary labours. He wrote a treatise on filial piety, in which he explained the essential properties of this virtue, which he regarded as the basis of all social and political duties, "the trunk, of which all the other virtues are branches, and universal charity the root."

The king of Loo, though he did not employ Confucius, cherished a profound esteem for his exalted virtues; and, being told that, although seventy years of age, he was as robust and studious as ever, he wished to see him, and had a private audience, in which Gae-kung paid him honours due only to an equal. Confucius endeavoured to imbue the king with sound maxims of political economy, recommending him to lighten the burthens of the people, that he might increase his revenue; citing this sentiment from the *Shu-king*: "A monarch, who looks upon his subjects as his children, will have subjects who regard their king as their father."

He now began to prepare for resigning the life which he had so well employed. He had completed the six *King*, and ceased to write more: but he deemed it his duty to return solemn thanks to heaven, which had given him strength to bring this great work to completion. He convened his most confidential disciples, and conducted them to one of the ancient mounds adjoining the pavilions before mentioned, where, by his direction, they prepared an altar, on which he placed the six volumes. Then, falling on his knees, and turning to the north, he ejaculated his grateful thanks to heaven, for its indulgent kindness in prolonging his life till he could accomplish so indispensable a work, which he now humbly offered to it. A few days after, he assembled his disciples again, to hear his last discourse. He desired them to bear in mind these final injunctions when they should see him no more. He then told them that he had aimed diligently to discharge his obligations towards them; that he had neglected nothing that could contribute to qualify them to be teachers of mankind; that in the existing state of the world, corrupted by vices and hostile to the reforms he had laboured to

* Their names and characters are detailed in Mem. Concern. Lee Chin. tt. xii. and xiii.

† Confucius is introduced in the Chung-yung as saying: "Hwuy was truly a man: choosing the invariable medium; when he succeeded in securing a virtue, he devoted himself to it with pertinacity, cherished it in his heart, and never parted with it more."

introduce, they must not expect that it would be an easy task to lead the bulk of the people to the practice of their duties; but they must not sink under disappointment, and above all things, they must preserve the precious deposit which had been in his custody, which he should now transfer to them, and which it must be their study to employ to the advantage of future generations. After this, he divested himself of the character of "master," admitting them only as friends, to enjoy the pleasure of his conversation.

The last public act of his life was to endeavour to excite the King of Loo to take arms against a treacherous minister of Tse, who had dethroned and murdered his sovereign. After this, he seldom appeared out of his house, beginning to experience the weight of years and its attendant infirmities. One day, his young grandson, Tsze-sze, perceiving him more serious and sorrowful than ordinarily, knelt before him, asked him why he was so dejected: "Is it," said the boy, "because you think the doctrine of Yaou and Shun will become extinct in the world, that you are so grieved? I have heard you say that, when the sire labours, the son should not be idle, seeing you so sad, I fear I may resemble such an idle son, if, being unable to divert your vexation, I do not try to share it." Confucius smiled, and said: "You have filial piety engraven on your heart. May the other virtues find a place there, and you will deserve the favour of heaven."

This indisposition was the prelude to a severe malady, from which he recovered, but its effects left him in a state of languor. He was constantly visited by his disciples, particularly by Tsze-kung. One day, Confucius met him at the door, supporting himself on a staff, and when he entered, the philosopher gave evident tokens of decay. He shed tears, and complained that his strength was failing and his eyes were dim, expressing himself in a rhyming triplet:

The great mountain is broken,
The strong beams are thrown down,
The sage is a dying plant.

He added: "The princes of the Shang dynasty are interred between two pillars; I am of that house, and I dreamed last night I was between two pillars, where I offered a sacrifice to my ancestors. This dream convinces me that I have not long to live; but this is not the source of my affliction; it is because I see that every monarch has degenerated from the virtues of his forefathers, and that all reject my doctrine." Tsze-kung consoled the sorrowing sage by telling him that he had disciples, who would tread in his paths, and complete what he had so well begun. He revived a little; but this was but a spark, which another incident extinguished.

Whilst hunting on the western frontier, the king met with an extraordinary quadruped, which was killed by his suite, and which proved to be a *lin*.^{*} Confucius saw the beast, and pronounced it to be the symbol of charity and sound doctrine. The destruction of an animal which had announced his birth, was considered by him as an omen of his death. He prepared for this event, and read over his writings once more, making a few corrections in them; after which he fell into a lethargy, which lasted seven days; and, at length (B.C. 479), he died at the age of seventy-three.

His grandson, Tsze-sze, being too young to perform his funeral rites, two of his disciples, who were present when he expired, undertook the office. According to custom, after closing his eyes, they put three pinches of rice

^{*} The *lin* is the female of this miraculous animal; the *he* the male; they are usually spoken of conjointly, like the *fung-ichang*, thus, *he-lin*.

into his mouth, and proceeded to array the body in the sumptuous habits of a minister of state. They purchased a piece of ground, at some distance to the north of the city, where they interred the mortal remains of the philosopher, erecting three mounds of earth to mark the spot, and planting a tree, the trunk of which is said to be still seen. All the ceremonies required by the ancient ritual were duly observed. Tsze-kung extended his period of mourning to six years, during which he resided near the tomb. Disciples from all the different states soon flocked to do homage to the memory of the sage; they congregated about the place with their families, and at length a village arose near the grave, which was called *Kung-le*, or "the village of Kung."

The remote age of Confucius, the slight attention paid to Chinese literature in Europe, a want of confidence in the ancient records of China, and other causes, have conspired to obscure the fame of this wonderful man, who is often regarded almost in the light of a fabulous personage. His biography, however, can be discredited only upon grounds which would destroy all historical evidence; and, assuming its truth, and that the writings and apophthegms attributed to him are genuine (and neither can be reasonably questioned), he must be ranked amongst the greatest characters of antiquity. He was, perhaps, the only reformer and legislator in early times who did not betray the natural weakness of aspiring to supernatural distinction, for even Socrates had his familiar genius. His persevering efforts to lead men into the path of reason and of natural religion were the offspring of pure philanthropy, without the least taint of ambition or of selfishness. His moral doctrine discovers none of the ingenious subtleties and incomprehensible logomachies of the Hindu school, and its severe simplicity forms a strong contrast with the ethical systems of ancient Greece. His maxims of conduct are of a practical, not of a speculative, character; applicable to all the pursuits and to all conditions of life, being based upon human nature: herein differing essentially from the mysticism of Laou-tsze and the sect of "the immortals." By disclaiming the original discovery of the truths he taught, he obviated at once the imputation of egotism and the dread of innovation, and they could not be better enforced than by the rectitude and blamelessness of his own life.*

CHARITY AND THE CLAIMS OF THE POOR.

A LECTURE BY THE EDITOR.

(Concluded from p. 187.)

In place of looking to the extension of charitable efforts, I look to the spread of a practical education, as affording the only means of rendering any permanent service to the working classes. And in laying stress upon the word practical, I wish to impress upon your mind the fact, that what is called education in modern days is but a poverty-stricken affair. There are more children of the working classes sent to school now than there were forty or fifty years ago; still, in practical education, the working man is worse off now than ever he was.

In former times the "respectable classes," the wealthy and educated, were in the habit of visiting the cottages of the poor, and there, in a kindly motherly way, the thrifty housewife poured a few lessons on good housewifery into the ears of the newly married cottar's daughter. They gave advice which was far above the gift of money—it was of worth far above what money could

* Asiatic Jour., vol. 1. p. 375, New Series.

purchase—and certainly never without good effect. If a difficulty arose about making both ends meet, the young wife felt that she could go and consult the lady of the squire, parson, doctor, lawyer or farmer, and be instructed; so that, although not educated according to the methods of any school system, she was practically advised and instructed in the method of making the most of what she had at her disposal. But things go no longer in that old groove. The cottager's or the mechanic's daughter becomes a wife, and must just make her own way as best she can. Trained probably in a miserable hut, or as one of a large family living in two rooms, she has never had any chance of learning how to do the best with her means; and if she makes but a poor hand of housewifery, who can honestly condemn her incompetence? To all who know the real difficulties attending the use of small means, she will appear as one who deserves far more of pity than condemnation, and unless some educational steps be taken, through which to compensate these daughters of the poor for what they have lost through the break up of the old system, it will be vain to hope for any amendment. If they have not even straw given them, why should we expect the tale of brick? The method of doing it may be safely left to the discretion of those who are learned in such matters. They would soon devise some practical scheme of operations. All I know is this, that if a few practically-minded ladies would take the matter up, all being workers, and not leaving the business to be attended to by paid officials, a measure of success would follow their efforts that would shed far more comfort over the working man's home than can be obtained by the gift of money or an endowment of coals.

And the same fact holds good with the workman. In other times the master felt himself bound to advise his journeyman. There was no gulf between master and man, for they worked together, and were, as the natural consequence, interested in each others' welfare. If the man wasted his means, the master gave him good advice in a plain, manly style, and generally with effect. He told of how he had got on through industry and thrift; showed that all who would rise must do the same; and thus, in a generous and moderate manner, threw a measure of his own wisdom and experience out as a buoy to save his journeyman from being wrecked and lost. This is no longer the case. There is now—especially in our great cities—no sympathy between the mechanic and his master. They seldom see, and rarely know each other. And as they who stand between the two are merely hired servants, they do not care to play the protecting and advising part which was played by the old masters. Thus the workman is left to find, through ruin and misery, how to use his means. He has no adviser wiser than himself, except, perhaps, the minister, who grows eloquent on Sundays about "not laying up treasure," and upon "the impropriety of being thoughtful for the morrow," and that rather adds to his weakness than operates to preserve him from the social ruin to which he is hurrying.

It must be granted that there is no hope, no possibility, of inducing the masters to resume their old position, but some way must be found through which to compensate the workman for what he has lost, and there is no other than that of rendering his education practical. Let him be taught to understand the laws which regulate labour, wages, and social progress. In every city places should be opened in which free lectures upon the laws of social economy should be given; and if they who take an interest in the progress of society would but turn their attention in this direction they would accomplish more practical good than can be achieved in any other way, even although millions

were expended. If they make the poor wiser, they will be doing all that lies in their power to improve their condition. And while they are at it, there is no reason to hinder them from pressing on in other directions, so that free lectures should be delivered in this and other halls which would embrace all the subjects that are interesting to intelligent beings and free citizens.

It is only the thoughtless who oppose the diffusion of knowledge; but the time is not far distant when a practical step in the educational direction will be taken. The people must be taught or they will sink into worse conditions; and, as the knowledge which even the wisest possess is but small in amount, there can be no reason to hinder its diffusion. Doubtless, there are numerous expenses attending upon such a proceeding, but after all it is cheaper to teach a man how to preserve himself from poverty than it is to keep him when he is plunged into it. In this district you could easily find the necessary funds. The doubt, in my mind, is whether funds are required; for I know of no reason why the clergy should not do the work. It has been suggested that they should undertake to deliver discourses, or even preach sermons upon social science, so as to render clear to all the art of making the most of a little; but, by the shallow and thoughtless, the proposal has been granted down. There is, however, some consolation in knowing that, being a wise one, it will rise up again; and in time it will be a realised fact. In our hours of authority we may be able to spread a mantle over a noble truth; but intolerance cannot destroy it, it can only briefly hide.

Why not use the churches for such lectures? To what purposes are they put all through the working week? People go up to them on Sundays, but why not on Mondays also? A true preacher does the best that can be done for his congregation, to instruct and fill their minds with truth pertaining to all subjects. Why not call upon the rectors and vicars to deliver weekly discourses in their churches, upon geology or physiology, chemistry or botany? Why not demand that they shall deliver lectures upon poetry, art, and history? True it is, that, as a rule, there are not many of them who could sufficiently master all these subjects, so as to discourse upon them intelligently; but having an earnest desire that way it is hard to say that they could not do so with three or four of the subjects. A man of due fixity of purpose can accomplish far more than is generally imagined. But say that they could not do much in this way, they at least could make provision for its being done by others. And fancy the beneficial effect of our churches being thus used. People would crowd into them readily enough, for the great mass desire to have knowledge supplied in such a form as brings it within their comprehension.

But, alas! so blind are many to the higher interests, that they would object to the churches and chapels being used for such purposes. In their estimation it would be profane. Wherein lies the profanity? What is a church if it be not a place wherein a man shall have his soul lifted Godward—wherein both his heart and mind shall be so filled and exalted with the knowledge of what God has accomplished in the world, that he can return homeward alike purer, nobler, and wiser? And all the things He has made are fitted, when properly described, to call forth such feelings as exalt and refine our better nature. The rocks and grasses, the birds and fishes, the stars and oceans, teem with evidences of His wisdom and care for His creatures—why should the poor man be shut out from a knowledge of all these things? Beneath our feet are the mighty ribs of gigantic animals, all of which lived

upon the surface of our earth, but eventually gave way for higher and more perfect forms. To my mind they are full of instruction, and I cannot understand why the working-man should not share it, and reap the advantages it bestows. They all bear the stamp of the same Author which we bear. And if man may be spoken of in a church, why not these also?

Some, however, are far more afraid of spreading knowledge itself than they are of giving it in churches. They seem to labour under the impression that the spread of knowledge is not good. Surely they will not say that God needs that man should be kept in ignorance—that the more ignorant the man the more likely God will be to love him. For, if so, then what shall we say of the clergy? They are spoken of as being the most learned class, and it will logically follow that God must hate them more than He hates any other class. They read and learn all about these things; the study of these marvels is to them a joy and recreation which operates to preserve them from plunging into those vices and rude enjoyments which destroy the labourer. They can look with disgust at what he does; but if he were so educated that his mind would seek delight in the pursuits which gladden them, he would be as much disgusted at what he now does as they are. And if men would turn their attention to this; would open schools, churches, chapels, and public rooms for such purposes, saying unto all, "Come, come freely without price!" there is no way in which charitable funds could be more beneficially employed; for by elevating the mind they would improve the habits of the working-classes.

It is in earnestness and with confidence that I press these matters upon your attention, being assured that it is our duty as Englishmen to use every available means towards blotting out pauperism, and the miseries it brings in its train. This is our duty. Our ancestors were called upon to do other work, which they did right nobly, or we should not be so free this day as we are. They strove in a thousand ways to promote the interests of their country; and when convinced of the existence of an evil—no matter if it were in the form of spiritual or kingly despotism, bad laws, or injurious physical agencies—they bent all their energies to the task, and paused not until the wrongs were redressed, or the evils were extinguished. They fought against wrong in every degree, in favour of freedom in every form. But it was not in their power to do all that needed to be done;—they did their best, and never bated a jot of heart or hope while life and the power of action remained. Shall we dare to enjoy the fruit of their labours without working in the spirit which animated them? Are we to sit down saying, Soul take thine ease! while doing nothing to extend the circle of good which they created for us? If so, then, in truth, we have become unworthy of their labours, and can only cumber the ground which should boast of sons worthy such noble sires.

I cannot believe that at heart Englishmen desire to live so ignobly. The very air we breathe, must operate to imbue us with a better spirit. All that men want is to see clearly what they should do, and they would act as earnestly as their ancestors acted. I have endeavoured to show in what way action should be taken, and the platform is free to others to propose more efficient means. I hold no bigoted attachment to my method, but should be glad to promote any which promises even a small measure of success. That which I feel most strongly, is not love for my own method, but hatred against hopeless inaction, and leaving all to the chapter of accidents.

They who are content to wait for chance to work cures which themselves have no courage to attempt, are like men at a fire who will not work the

engines, but who wait for rain to relieve them from the necessity of labouring. Having no faith in good fortune, my argument has ever been in favour of earnest manful working; and if the aim be honest, if the end be the cultivation of thinking habits among the toilers, the result cannot be otherwise than good. I ask you to aid all plans which have this end in view. Do something towards rendering the return of the agonies of this winter impossible; and depend upon it, if you work in love and earnestness, at your latest hour it will prove a consolation to you to know that you have reduced in some degree the pressure of human misery, and have assisted in bringing about that better condition of things which all are sighing for, but which can only come as the consequence of wise obedience to the Eternal Laws.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF SOLOMON.

(Continued from p. 192.)

NEXT to the temple-building, the main interest in Solomon's life passes on to his commerce, and the marvels connected with the visit of the Queen of Sheba. It appears from the history that he had penetration enough to perceive the advantage of trade. It has been suggested that his mind was turned to this through the exhaustion of the ample means left him by David, although how the building of such a comparatively small temple could have crippled his resources, it is hard to understand. If it were said that his commercial speculations were commenced through the influence of his Egyptian wife—through the stimulant the information furnished by her attendants had given him, it would probably be nearer the truth. There is every reason for believing the Egyptians to have been far more deeply versed in naval matters than was generally believed a few years ago. Evidently they were pretty well acquainted with the products of Africa and India; and, although much of their information may have been derived from travellers, much must have been gathered by themselves. But, whether sailors or otherwise, it is likely that the Egyptians who attended the wife of Solomon gave him the information which filled his mind with those ideas that prompted him to send forth ships to make discoveries and profit.

Whatever was the cause, it is clear that he called in the assistance of the Phœnicians, who at that time carried on a large trade on the coast of the Mediterranean. It appears that Solomon had conceived the idea of trading down the Red Sea, and out by its mouth, either to Africa on the one hand, or Arabia and India on the other. This would not interfere with the Phœnician trade, but would rather prove advantageous as opening new routes, and they were always willing to assist in such measures. The men came to Ezion-geber, on the Coast of the Red Sea, where, after much delay, a fleet was fitted out to commence its commerce with the world. Whether Solomon was right, religiously, in this, has been sorely debated, but without any practical result. Why he should not have been so, we cannot perceive; although his system, as afterwards developed, was undoubtedly pernicious. There are no reasons for supposing commerce to be a crime, or that 'protection' should be a part of the Apostles' creed. But the theory is that "God intended the Hebrews to continue as a distinct people, and to grow great in their confidence in Him as the Only God; He designed that they should not communicate with other nations, until the proper time arrived when he would lead them forth to have dominion." And it seems to be the theory that "Solomon, by this trading, by sending out ships, endangered the security of the Hebrew nation, and rendered it likely the people would fall into the heathen practices with which, through this travel, they were sure to become acquainted." It may be so; and,

yet, does it not seem more reasonable to believe that, if the Jews had earlier cultivated a knowledge of the world, they would never have degenerated into the bigotry and pride which marked their later career? But, so far as the theory itself is concerned, I cast it aside as ridiculously at variance with all the ways of God to man. He bids us go out and learn, and is never in any fear of our learning too much. If we stay ever at home, we are cramped, and rendered unfit for human communion, precisely as the Hebrews were.

But where did the fleet sail to? To Ophir, is the answer; but, unfortunately, this only answers the question, without informing us of what we wished to know. For now we must ask, And where was Ophir? The geographical position of this place is not stated in any of the old books, and hence we are compelled to examine the cargo to learn from whence it was brought. To name the articles is to show whence they came: We find that they brought "gold in abundance," with "silver and ivory, wood of the almag tree, peacocks, and asses;" precious stones also formed part of the lading, and doubtless other valuable matters. It is said that the weight of gold brought in one year to Solomon by his fleet was 666 talents—equal to about £4,000,000, and if to this we are to add other riches; then, undoubtedly they were richer fleets than ever before or since were in the Indian waters. For, as the cargo shows, the fleet must have gone away upon the Indian coast, and probably as far as China. It appears the first fleet was away between two and three years, but after that he seems to have had a yearly fleet sent to Ophir, and one triennially sent to Tarshish. And the various articles he obtained from the new coasts, he kept for his own use, or sold to Syrian merchants, so that young Assyria was doubtless decorated with gems, and various articles of show, obtained by Solomon upon the Indian and other coasts. That is, if we presuppose all these narratives to be true in substance; which is, of course, a large concession, resting upon air and nothing better.

The visit of the Queen of Sheba forms an episode in this history which is worthy of close attention. Not because of its probable truth, for it appears to me to be utterly unbelievable as it is narrated, although there may be some small measure of fact underlying it. The narrative sets forth that, "when the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions."* These hard questions were riddles; not, however, the silly ones now repeated at little parties, but such as generally involved some large truth: though the specimens furnished by the Eastern nations of those proposed to Solomon upon this occasion are not of the highest order.

Here, however, it is necessary to observe that the Arabs and the Abyssinians have a number of curious stories about this visit and its marvels, many of which are to be found in notes to Sale's Koran. Dr. Kitto has collected them, and, as one part of his narrative reproduces the riddle portion, I shall here introduce it. It must, however, be remembered that, according to the Arab version, this Queen did not visit Solomon until she had first sent messengers and tests, in order to discover if he were so very wise.



(To be continued.)

* 1 Kings x. 1.

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THE MORALITY OF OFFICIAL LIFE—FORGERY.

It is now known to be utterly impossible for a people to wield authority in conducting the affairs of the world unless through maintaining in action those moral principles which themselves have publicly approved, and which are assented to by the most civilised nations. Retrogression in morals is quite as destructive as retrogression in physical science. We cannot abandon vaccination, neither can we give up our sanitary improvements, without multiplying the weight of those calamities against which they were erected as bulwarks. It is impossible to go back so as to retrograde no further than to the position we occupied before taking our retrogressive step. If we retire at all, it must be to sink to a much lower level than that from which we started. Such is the settled law of nature, which operates, in spirit, in the world of human action, quite as forcibly as, in a more tangible form, upon the coastline of our island, where the big wave is thrown back beyond the line from whence it leapt forward to assault our chalky cliffs. We have abandoned the slave trade and the slave system, and can no more return with safety to them than we could go back to the mud huts and Church authority of the Middle Ages. If a man were to rise up in Parliament to propose the restoration of these infamous systems, he would be esteemed as little better than a lunatic, utterly unfit to represent an English borough, and would hardly meet a welcome even in aristocratic circles, where, it must be confessed, there is no great rage in favour of freedom.

It will be conceded by all parties in the nation that the same law holds good in relation to certain forms and practices of our government. Nobody believes it possible for us to return with safety to the form of despotism which flourished in the Tudor Age; having once fought against, conquered, and abandoned it, we cannot return to its policy without involving the certainty of national ruin. Why, then, should it be presumed that we can safely revert to that system of official lying, of Ministerial forgeries, and Cabinet frauds, which disgraced England in the days of Queen Anne, through which power was given into the hands of Harley and his associates? The present Ministry seems to be labouring under the impression that such a course is alike safe and proper; or, at least, Lord Palmerston, with others, who have been long associated with him, think so; and it is for this English nation to decide whether

such a system is to be pursued and defended. The principle of Cabinet forgery has been acted upon, and in all its baseness vindicated. We say baseness, for if there be any one thing more infamous than another, it is for such men to vindicate upon the floor of the House, the wickedness of deliberately, and upon system, deceiving Parliament and the nation, as they recently did, in relation to the papers laid before them regarding the Afghan war; a wickedness which, in the case alluded to, hurried us into the approval of an unjust invasion, and covered the name of an honourable man with infamy.

Every reading man who knows anything of the history of that mournful struggle, is aware of the injustice and treachery which marked the whole course of our proceedings; of the terrible trials through which, in marches and battles, our soldiers passed; of the awful massacre in the Cabul Pass, when only a solitary horseman escaped to Jellalabad to carry the story of how 4,500 soldiers, and 12,000 camp followers, had been slain by cold, hunger, and bullets; and of the utter incompetency, and, in some instances, cowardice of the men who had decided upon commencing the war. The Afghan invasion rests upon Lord Auckland and the greedy band who overshot their mark, for once, in preaching the doctrine of danger from invasion. There is a party among us which is always ready to declare that danger threatens. They do not wish for war, but desire to keep the nation stimulated with the idea of its being a duty to maintain a war expenditure. When war actually threatens, they are especially desirous of preventing an outbreak; but immediately the danger has passed away, they fall back into the old track, and preach as loudly as ever about the weakness of our defences and the coming of an enemy. The results are that an immense expenditure is kept up, and these harpies are fed and clothed to their hearts' content. The poor are fleeced, foreign nations are calumniated, and a spirit of bitterness is kept alive. Yet, what matters, while the scions of our noble houses can strut in their feathers, and the poverty-stricken members can be so easily fed at the public expense!

The cry of invasion was raised in 1836 and 1837, and then the wild statement was ventured in our newspapers that Russia would invade India "through the Afghan country." There was no more danger of this than of an invasion of the moon; but, as a rule, no invasion panic succeeds unless it involve a series of impossibilities. The theory had gone abroad, and Lord Auckland, as Governor-General of India, "became convinced of its truth." So much the worse for India and England, that men so easily duped by idle fancies were in possession of the substance of power. At that time a clever and brave man, Dost Mahomed, held the throne in Cabul, from which, ten years before, Shah Soojah had been expelled. The latter was our pensioner and lacquey—incompetent and fraudulent, his people hated him, and without our aid he was powerless. It was hinted by the immoral class of politicians, those who view the world as a devil's world, that, if he were restored to Cabul by our interference, he would become our slave; and, consequently, if the Russians attempted anything in that direction, we should always have a friend at the outpost. But, it was asked, "May it not be that he who is now there—Dost Mahomed—is quite as much our friend as Shah Soojah could be, even if we re-established him? And if so, then will it not be better to cultivate his friendship than it will be to force a people to receive back a man whom they hate, and thus alienate them from our cause, rather than win them to our side?" In order to discover the truth, Alexander Burnes, an experienced Indian officer, was commissioned to visit Cabul and confer with its ruler. He did so, and he found him to be a most able prince, who

desired above all things to cultivate the good will of the English, "because," as he said, "they are famous for their bravery and their respect for treaties." Thus all we wanted we could have without cost, and if Russia did advance, of which there was no danger, then in Dost Mahomed we had an ally who, as a man of action, was infinitely superior to Shah Soojah.

Lord Palmerston has stated to the House that Dost Mahomed was treacherous, was a double dealer, and not to be believed; but his memory fails him, or he would remember that it was not resolved to abandon him upon any such ground. And, moreover, the very acts which his Lordship cited against him, were forced upon him through our injustice. The facts are, that when, in 1837, Lord Auckland, accompanied by McNaghten, Torrens, and Calvin, was enjoying the autumn within the cool district above a thousand miles from Calcutta and his Council, they debated which of three courses to pursue. The first was "to do nothing," the second, "to support Dost Mahomed," and the third was "to re-establish Shah Soojah." At that time Lord Auckland was aware of the fact that the Persians were attacking Herat, and that the ruler of Cabul, wishing to avoid a collision with Persia, was "desirous of "being upon the most friendly terms with England;" he knew him to have "dealt in the most straightforward manner" with Burnes, and was, through the information he had received, placed in a position to do ample justice to the whole case. He did not, however, decide it upon its merits, neither did he consider what was best for the Affghans; but, deluded by the theory that English interests in India would be strengthened if every native power were weakened, he resolved upon setting up Shah Soojah as the Company's puppet. He broke with the ruler of Cabul, not because of believing him to be in any sense unfaithful, but through believing Shah Soojah would be less competent and more flexible. The whole war lay in that conclusion; for immediately it was arrived at a flaming proclamation was sent forth by Lord Auckland, in which the vilest falsehoods against Dost Mahomed were coupled with the statement that Shah Soojah was popular in Affghanistan, which was known to be as near the truth as it would be to say Francis II. is popular in Naples. The Governor-General of India descended to the baseness of knowingly publishing a tissue of falsehoods against the man he desired to ruin.

Thus the war, whose first germ lay in misrepresentations about Russian invasion, got up for selfish purposes, was resolved upon as a measure of policy. His Lordship had no personal hate of Dost Mahomed, but fought against him in order to carry out a plan of his own contriving. It was, as the Auckland party declared, "a great game;" and unhappily our army and our treasure had to pay. The Indian Company would not have done anything so foolish. Bad as it was, it shrunk from such treachery and unprovoked assaults; so that, from the first, it was pronounced to be a war determined upon in England, which, as a Company, they could not approve. Over the terrible marches and disasters all our people wept; but they knew not that all those agonies were simply a just retribution for the treacherous conduct we had initiated. Eventually the reverses were compensated for by brilliant victories. Sale, Nott, and Pollock, all vindicated our national heroism; but, even had they done an hundred times more, they could not recover the dead, or wipe off the stain attached by the war itself to the national honour.

In England there were a few men who knew the facts, and, consequently, Parliamentary demands were made for evidence to justify the invasion. The Government of the day needed to prove that Dost Mahomed was a traitor, a deceiver; for it dared not openly avow the immoral principles, and the defiance

of truth, honour, and justice, upon which the war was based. But how could this be done? How could they persuade the people of this country that all had been righteously done? Surmises are not enough in a blue book. Evidence must be given, and that of a tangible character. Whence could this be gained? The only authority upon which the government could rely, Burnes, had so completely vindicated the ruler whose integrity they required to impeach, that if his papers were sent out to the world the entire policy of the Government would be condemned as vile and iniquitous. In his letters the clearest evidence was furnished proving Dost Mahomed's true character and aims to be noble and upon our side! Under these circumstances it was resolved to mutilate his letters, so that, by means of omissions and textual modifications, they would be made to read precisely the reverse of what the writer intended—as if their author approved the policy of the Government, and considered the ruler of Cabul to be utterly untrustworthy. Black was made to be white; innocence was changed into guilt; and the forger pointed to Burnes as furnishing abundant proof of the soundness of their policy. He was publicly called the cause of that war. Every line calculated to lead to the belief of Dost Mahomed being an honest man was carefully suppressed, and in some instances where Burnes quoted from a letter language against him, in order to reply to it, the words he quoted were given as his own, and his reply was omitted. A more scandalous case of fraud and forgery was never committed, and had any poor man been guilty of a similar act, in order to obtain ten pounds, he would have found his way to the bar of the Old Bailey, and thence to some convict establishment.

The defensive plea put in by many is, that this atrocious proceeding dates some twenty years back. True, but time does not consecrate wrong, and as the same men are in power, we hold them to be still responsible. The Minister himself feels the force of the argument, and has ever felt it. In 1842, when, upon Mr. Baillie's motion, Lord Palmerston was questioned upon this subject, he boldly asserted in the House that "Lord Auckland had adopted, and could not have done otherwise than adopt, the views of Alexander Burnes;" but he knew at that time the contrary was true. In 1848 when replying upon this charge of omissions, his Lordship declared that "the papers laid before the House contained a faithful report of the views presented by Sir A. Burnes to the Government;" but he knew that this was not the case. The other day he declared that "Burnes was deceived by the Dost, and his opinions could not be acted upon." Thus, upon each occasion he has made a fresh but contradictory statement, and now he stands forward to justify the fraud practised upon the nation. Where, then, are all our securities? our boasts of freedom? our sense of honour? and our theory that, as English gentlemen conduct the Government, there is no danger of dishonourable doings? What is there we have to rely upon when the Government publishes forged documents? How are we any longer to place confidence in printed blue books? Nothing that has occurred during the past century has done more to destroy confidence in public men than has been accomplished by the proof of this treachery, forgery, and wilful lying; and unless the House of Commons does something whereby to redeem itself from the danger of being thus deceived, it will remain at the mercy of a forging minister. The matter has, however, larger and more serious issues than that; for such things may not pass unchallenged without evil resulting to the moral sense of the nation at large.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XIV.

SPIRITUAL TERRORISM.

SPAIN and Portugal were the only countries in which the Inquisition ever became a permanent institution, or wherein its principles were completely carried out. In France it soon died a natural death. In the Italian States it mainly served a political purpose, and was never a prominent institution; while in Germany it can scarcely be said to have been at any time established in its completeness. Only in Cologne was it for any length of time a recognised tribunal. While, however, this was so, it is nevertheless true that the influence of this institution extended itself over the whole of Continental Europe. The fear of heresy becoming prevalent in any particular district, the dread of a province or country becoming suspected of disaffection, and a means and reason being thus furnished for the Church to call for the establishment of this tribunal, must have tended to repress freethought and enquiry everywhere. Moreover, the constant visits of the itinerant Dominicans, who were ever ready to uphold the acts of the Inquisition (of which they were proud, as the development of the idea of their founder), must have been effectual to produce in the minds of the vulgar, to whom these itinerant preachers addressed their sermons, a false view of the right of the Church to repress thought; and with that to create the idea (so subversive of morality) that crime committed in the name of God, and for the service of the Church, was no longer crime but virtue.

In our review of the "Characteristics of the Reformation," it will become our business to trace the gradual growth in Europe of a feeling of restlessness, under this Spiritual Terrorism, rapidly settling into a determination to cast off the unbearable yoke laid upon the minds and consciences of the people; until at length, by the voice of Luther, the unuttered feelings of thousands found expression, and then the progress of the great revolt against the Church will be seen to be as rapid and thorough as the tyranny had been great and unrelenting. Our task will now be to watch the seeds of Reformation, painfully sown through persecution, amid sorrow and misery, but steadily though slowly germinating in the darkness of the ages of priestly domination, and at length springing up into vigorous life. It is a significant fact that even in Spain and Portugal, where the priest became the supreme despot, where every care was taken, not only to prevent the existence of the shadow of freedom, but to destroy all knowledge of its existence—to coerce people into forgetting its very name, these seeds bore vigorous fruit; teaching Priestcraft a lesson, if it could learn it, that, after all, its attempt is one which can never be successful, and that coerce and drill, and despotise over, and brutalize the human mind as it may, there will be still be left somewhat above its might, needing but the kindling spark to make it burst into a flame. The spark, in this case, was the voice of Luther in Germany, which was heard even in Spain—heard and responded to by many among the people; heard, too, by the Inquisition, which was thereby roused to a fresh life. Then, again, the Dominicans vindicated their character as the spiritual police of the Church, and became clamorous for the establishment of the "Holy Office" in the several countries of Europe, in order to suppress the new heresy of Luther in like manner as before the Albigensian heresy had been suppressed. But they aimed in this at an impossibility; a new era had dawned upon the world. Moreover, the eyes of men were opened to the character

and results of a priestly tribunal, with powers of sentencing to death. The Dominicans had saturated the soil of Spain with blood, and the effort to stem the Reformation was therefore left to cleaner hands and subtler spirits than theirs. Their work was done; another must begin, and in this necessity we shall see the explanation of the rise of the Jesuits, who thenceforth supplanted the Dominicans as the defenders of the faith.

But what shall we say of these inquisitors? Are they to be classed with the rest of mankind, as standing on the same level with other men, having the same emotions and passions? Or are we to suppose that a peculiar class of beings, demi-human, demi-devilish, were provided by an Infernal Providence for the purposes of the Church, and to act as persecutors and inquisitors? Alas! we are sorrowfully compelled to admit that they were men like ourselves—men who had been loved, cherished, and cared for, nay, who perhaps had themselves loved and cared for others. In them we see what humanity may become, when it allows itself to become part of a great priestly system. And perhaps we are wrong in saying they were men—they were priests, and from the man to the priest is a long and a dreary road of degradation. For a man to have fallen so low as (whether interestedly or disinterestedly we care not) to teach, and perchance believe, that the Infinite God above intended that, for the aggrandisement of the power and wealth of the Church, His laws should be violated, His children maltreated and enslaved, is a fearful thing.

"But a priest is not necessarily an inquisitor." In the inquisitor, however, we have the full-blown priest, the ultimate result producible by subjecting men to the influence of a priestly system. That there were some bloodthirsty cannibal kind of men, who were concerned in the "Holy Office," and became familiars from the love of the work they had to do, is a thing we fear must be admitted; but we firmly believe (and for the honour and respect we bear to human nature we are glad to be able to believe) that there were more like Dominic, who did the work as a painful duty, as a dread necessity, imposed upon them in order to prevent the destruction of men's souls. 'Better a man suffer in this world than in the next,' was doubtless the sincere thought of many among those dark and fearful men. With a grim "charity" many such fanatics as these went about their dreadful task, even more to be pitied than the victims whom they tortured.

The history of the Church is to us a terrible history—because it is that of the gradual degradation of a noble idea. The idea of a Church, as a brotherhood of love and duty, as a moral bond existing between men determined to work out, as far as in them lies, the will of God on earth, is a right noble one. This was the idea of the early Christians, so far as they worked out the theory of a Church at all, and the bond subsisting between them and their bishops, even after the hierarchical element had made some progress, was a bond of love. Unassisted by external power, without any authority than one delegated by the freewill of its members, the early Church based itself on the idea of love; and so stable was the basis thus formed, that far down into the ages, long after the original reality was lost, the people still continued to love the Church.

Everything that is in its nature unjust, by a beautiful law running through life and history, becomes its own Nemesis; so with Priestcraft. As the ages rolled, it became its own destroyer. Gradually, as the priest usurped the place of the early pastor and teacher, as the Church of the early ages was replaced by the Church of Priestcraft, a change took place in the feelings of the people

towards it. The priesthood had now become an oligarchy, a caste distinct from the body of the people; the people no longer regarded them with feelings of affection, but the prevailing feeling was a superstitious reverence akin to fear. Throughout the Middle Ages the Church sought by its ceremonies, the gorgeous vestments of the priests, the massive ecclesiastical architecture, the pomp of its ritual observances, in manifold ways, in fact, to impress the minds of men with this feeling of reverence. How far she was successful in this may easily be judged when we duly consider the means employed. The Church, and all connected with it, were surrounded with an air of mystery well calculated to impress with awe the minds of a superstitious generation—nay, so well adapted for this purpose that the spell is around us yet.

Who can go into one of the old cathedrals, and, in the dim and mellow light, amidst the massive forms of the Gothic architecture, listen to the solemn music, the grand organ tones, resounding from the lofty domed roof, and dying away amid the distant arches, anon mingled with, and then replaced by, the sweet voices of unseen chanters, without feeling impressed with an emotion akin to awe? We do not say the feeling is a bad one—on the contrary, we believe it to be a good one; but only good when kept within its proper limits by the force of the cultivated reason. Then it has a high religious use and value. But, used as it was for the purposes of Priestcraft, in that mediæval Church, used to unduly impress the uncultivated minds of ignorant men, it was altogether bad, its use was a superstitious one, and men were rendered slaves by it. Who, too, can contemplate the fact mentioned by the historian, that at many monasteries of the Middle Ages a continual service was kept up without intermission, not for days or weeks or years, but for centuries, and not recognize in that another source of superstitious awe? Fancy the feeling with which the ignorant peasant would cast his eyes towards the mountain-convent, and see, night after night, that light for ever burning there, and listen to the eternal chanting of the monks as it came on the wings of the wind adown the mountain side. From birth to death the man of the Middle Ages was surrounded with an atmosphere of mystery by the Church, and naturally looked upon her priests—the hierophants of these mysteries—with awe and reverence, and thus became the willing slave of the Church.

But here again Priestcraft became its own Nemesis. It foolishly fancied that the power thus gained would last for ever; and it might have lasted longer than it did, but that the Church, in its false security, outraged the moral sense of mankind. Presuming upon the strong basis of reverence on which it was fixed, the Church allowed vices and abominations of all kinds to creep into her bosom, and, even in the midst of the mediæval darkness, the moral sense of men revolted. Then came the intellectual rebellion against Church authority, all the more powerful because it had a moral basis. The conscience and reason of the better men, and the more educated minds, were thus arraying themselves against the Church. What must the Church do? Reform herself? This, through a Hildebrand and others, she attempted, but the disease was ingrained; besides, to reform herself was to acknowledge her errors, and that would be the destruction of her infallibility. So Priestcraft sought and found another basis for Church authority—that of fear. The age of Spiritual Terrorism and the Inquisition, with its theory of persecution in the name of God, and for the sake of religion, with its practice of torture, its faggots, its torches, and its thumbscrews, was ushered in upon the world.

Thus, as the ages rolled, the idea on which Church authority was based was degraded from love to reverence, from reverence to fear. At first, living

in the hearts of the people; afterwards, in their superstition; and then by virtue of their terror. For two centuries this idea was paramount; and Priestcraft, glorying in its apparent conquest, proudly lifted its head, and a spiritual despotism, such as the world had never seen, was created. But once again the evil and unjust thing was to be its own Nemesis. Priestcraft had forgotten that there is a law above that of terror. Persecution was found ineffectual to stay human progress, and the day of spiritual terror culminated in the overthrow of the ancient Church throughout a great portion of Europe.

JAS. L. GOODING.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 1.—SACRED BUDDHIST BOOKS AND DATES.

ONE of the most popular classes of arguments used by the old school of writers upon the Christian evidences was to the effect that, if the Christian system were religiously untrue, it would not have succeeded historically so rapidly as it did; would not have found so many earnest men prepared at all hazards, not even halting at the loss of life itself, to stand forth and give it their support; would not have won for itself such a proud position on the page of history; and, above all, would not have succeeded in maintaining its position, in defiance of the assaults of its varied opponents. Only that class of preachers and teachers that are a hundred years behind their age—who reproduce the old sermons and essays—now depend upon that time-honoured, but worthless argument; still, as they constitute the majority of our modern teachers, by far the larger portion of the nation accept it as a demonstration. In the course of a few years this will be changed. The rising generation of preachers will repeat the sermons and essays now prepared by the few, and thus a more healthy state of thought and reasoning on the subject will be diffused abroad.

It is, however, remarkably curious that any person now living can cling to these absurd notions; for, if they were sound, then, in presence of recent evidences collected by the Mormons, we should be compelled to confess Mormonism, seeing it is evident more converts are made to that faith within a few years of its founder's death than in a like period were made to the cause of Christianity. If Mahometanism be introduced as a parallel, then Christianity will have no chance of carrying away the palm; for, clearly, more converts were made to the faith of the Prophet within ten years after his return to Mecca, than to the cause of Christianity within thirty years after Jesus's teaching in Jerusalem. Neither will it be questioned that the Arab followers of Mahomet were as heroic as those who rallied beneath the Christian symbol, for braver men than they who followed Omar cannot be found.

We allude to these instances not with the intent of prejudicing the cases, or to show that there is a perfect equality in value, but merely to establish that the rapid spread of an opinion, with the measure of earnestness of its advocates, cannot fairly be cited as furnishing anything in the shape of proof of its truth. Indeed, even if the soundness of this evidential argument were admitted, it would not lead us to the acceptance of Christianity; on the contrary, it would lead us far away, and we should be logically compelled to accept a form of faith which is now generally repudiated; for our popular system is not believed by the majority of human beings. All the other religions, too, Hindu, Chinese, and American, have boasted their able and heroic

men, who at all risks stood in their defence—men who argued and persuaded, who fought hard, and eventually succeeded in convincing millions of their being true. If, therefore, the numerical force of those who believe is to be cited as a valid argument, then, as the first step towards finding our religion, we must look up and down the world, and ransack the pages of history to discover which is now the strongest party, and which succeeded with the greatest speed.

Of course it will be very readily conceived that there are insuperable difficulties lying in the way to prevent a correct census from being taken, so that we can only approximate to a correct result, and if we accept the statistics furnished by some of our Christian priests and missionaries, although we may doubt their correctness, the doubt will not be based upon the idea that the religion of Europe has been unfairly treated, for their figures tell against the supremacy of Christianity, and show that the believers in other religions are more numerous. There can be no reason for refusing to accept their conclusions, but only for questioning if they have not put a better face upon their own side than the facts will warrant. They acknowledge that there are above 400,000,000 Buddhists in the world, and that the Christians do not number so high by above one-half. They admit that the Buddhists are the most numerous, the followers of Mahomet the next, Christianity standing third upon the list. Consequently, if majorities are to rule, then we should all join the Buddhist Church, wherein, and much to their astonishment, many would discover that the same moral truths are taught as in the Christian, and not merely a few of the spiritual ones. But in making up the Christian statistics it happens most unfortunately that all are reckoned who dwell in 'Christian lands.' Thus, although it be declared upon high authority, that the working classes of England and other countries have deserted from the faith, and are called infidels, when the statistics of Christianity are supplied, they are all reckoned as true Christians. Moreover, although the Protestants deny that Catholics and Greek Churchmen are Christians, in the proper sense of the term, yet when Christianity is contrasted in point of numbers with the Buddhists, then to swell the total, all these repudiated Churches are reckoned as belonging to the true fold. If only such were numbered as are Christians indeed, the comparative standard would show most unfavourably for the Creed of Christendom.

Unfortunately for the inquirer our knowledge of the history and peculiarities of Buddhism is not commensurate with its importance. But a few years ago, we positively knew nothing satisfactory of the system or of its Founder. Some vague and romantic stories were circulated about his life and doctrines, in which, according to the usual method of dealing with foreign religions and their founders, he is represented as an imposter, while in others it is set forth that all taught by the Buddhists had been first stolen from our Sacred Books and then rudely disfigured. Thus were men taught, and not encouraged to search for the truth; for it was assumed that we possess all religious truth which is of any practical value, and, consequently, that all such study would be thrown away. Fortunately, however, there have been some who broke through these bonds, and brought to light a rich body of facts connected with this religion; and, although what we are now in possession of, obtained through their labours, only shows us how much more may be obtained, and how much more carefully we must study these records before the whole truth will be brought out, still we know enough already to qualify us for refuting the old stupid and false stories, and to make us certain that in the person of the

Founder of Buddhism, a great and noble teacher moved, and taught, and suffered amid the Indian nations.

The modern sources of our knowledge are various. Mr. Hodgson, long a resident in Nepal, and then in Ceylon, first collected and translated many of their Sacred Books. He gave fifty volumes in Sanscrit and two hundred in Thibetian to various Asiatic Societies. To our London Society, and at various times, he gave, collectively, above four hundred of the most valuable volumes, and, with shame be it said not one of them has yet been translated. The French, according to their custom, translated all they received, and then actually sent over to obtain French renderings of our copies, which were permitted, so that every Frenchman can, if he desire it, see what these books contain; while not a single line was rendered into our own tongue. We talk about the bigotry of Catholic countries, but are too apt in forgetting the equal or greater bigotry at home, which has no parallel save in its own gross injustice. For if party purposes were not to be served they would have been translated. Suppose these volumes had contained any passages which, either directly or indirectly, were susceptible of such distortion as to afford proof of the sanctity of our prevailing Church System. Is there any reasonable man who can suppose such passage would not have been at once translated and trumpeted abroad throughout the land? Why, then, if truth and knowledge be our object, should passages of an opposite character remain hidden behind an unknown tongue—unknown at least to the great majority of Britons? It is true, indeed, that some parts of the Buddhist books have been translated by private persons, but these are sold at such an enormous price that, so far as fifty-nine sixtieths of the people are concerned, they may as well have been wholly prohibited. "Upham's Miahavansi, &c.," "Hodgson's Buddhism in Ceylon," "Priault's Questiones Mosaicæ," "Wilson's Lecture on Buddhism," "The Cave Inscriptions," "Bhilsa Topes," by Cunningham, "Prinsep's Journal," "Maurice on Buddhism," "Bournouf and Remusat on the same." These are available to the modern reader, and it is such works, coupled with various papers in the "Bengal and London Asiatic Journals," that we have to us as guides, and from which we are to draw our papers on Buddhism and its Founder.

But the preliminary question arises as to the period in history at which Buddha taught. Various dates have been assigned, but upon this point no two nations, no two groups of Buddhist Churches, are agreed. The religion extends over China, Tartary, Thibet, Lao, Burmah, Siam, Japan, Ceylon, and many of the islands, all of which have copies of the Sacred Books, which agree well enough in the matters of doctrine and history, but none agree upon this point, for there is a wide gulf lying between them in relation to all chronological affairs. Of course, much of this depends upon the fact, that every nation likes to locate within its own boundaries its own religious heroes; and, although the Chinese admit that Buddhism was an importation, they seem desirous of conveying the idea that they had had it at a former period—that in China it antedated its reintroduction. Then, too, another reason lies in the fact that Buddha is not a proper name—is not the name of a man, but is a generic term, signifying 'wisdom,' 'the wise,' or 'he through whom all is known.' The name of this hero was Sakya Muni, and it was only after long years of pain, and teaching, and active labour he attained to the blessed condition of Buddha-hood.

And here, while speaking of names, it will be as well to notice that the princely name of the Founder of this faith was Sibbhartha, or 'he by whom the

'end is accomplished;' his father's name, *Suddhodana*, means 'he whose food is pure;' and his mother's, *Mayadevi*, means 'illusion,' 'Divine illusion.' Some have assumed from this that the whole narrative is a fabrication, or a kind of "Pilgrim's Progress" allegory. Say that this were true, how then are we to account for the coming of the ideas and the doctrines which were allegorized? They must have been first taught, and hence their teacher must be found. We believe that there were many Buddhas, many who, as wise men, patient and self-sacrificing men, were so called, but that only one succeeded in establishing a system. This, however, is a moot point which is here suggested with due humility.

Many of our Asiatic scholars have fixed the date of his birth as 2056 B.C., but, although it is quite possible to shew that a Buddha then lived, it is equally possible to demonstrate that it was not the Buddha of history. Then comes the year 1040 B.C., which has many supporters, but again they are at fault, for no system has ever been made out as then established. The Abbé Huc fixes his birth at 960 B.C., and, doubtless, a Buddha then existed. Come down, however, to 623 B.C., and all agree that the Buddha of history was then in existence, acting as the reformer-teacher of Buddhism as it is now known. Why, then, the controversy? Because, while all agree about the date and actions, they differ regarding his work; some calling him the creator of a new system, and others treating him as only a reformer. One party says that Buddhism proceeded from him, and another, that he only remodelled it. Such are the contradictions given at the very outset of this inquiry, and, painful to say, in a very narrow spirit they are continued throughout the whole story.

P. W. P.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF SOLOMON.

(Continued from p. 208.)

THEY relate that with the messengers "she sent five hundred youths dressed like maidens, and the same number of maidens like young men, with instructions that they were to behave accordingly in the presence of Solomon. She had also a thousand carpets prepared, wrought with gold and silver, a crown composed of the finest pearls and hyacinths, and many loads of musk, amber, and aloes, and other precious products of South Arabia. To these she added a closed casket, containing an unperforated pearl, a diamond intricately pierced, and a goblet of crystal. The letter thus referred to these things:—'As a true prophet, thou wilt no doubt be able to distinguish the youths from the maidens; to divine the contents of the enclosed casket; to perforate the pearl; to thread the diamond; and to fill the goblet with water that hath not dropped from the clouds, nor gushed forth from the earth.'

"When they reached Jerusalem, Solomon told them the contents of the letter before they presented it, and made light of their mighty problems. He caused the slaves to wash themselves, and from the manner in which they applied the water, detected their sex. He directed a young and fiery horse to be ridden through the camp at the top of its speed, and on its return caused its copious perspiration to be collected in the goblet. The pearl he perforated by a stone occultly known to him. The threading of the diamond puzzled him for a moment, but at length he inserted a small worm, which wound its way through,

"leaving a silken thread behind it. Having done this, he dismissed the ambassadors, without accepting their presents.

"This, and the reports her emissaries brought, determined the queen to visit Jerusalem in person. When she came, Solomon, who had heard a piece of scandal about her—no less than that she had cloven feet—first of all demonstrated his sagacity by the mode in which he tested this report. He caused her to be conducted over a crystal floor, below which was real water, with a quantity of fish swimming about. Balkis, who had never before seen a crystal floor, supposed there was water to be passed through, and therefore slightly lifted her robe, enabling the king to satisfy himself that she had a very neat foot, not at all cloven.*

The account in Kings is not so full in one sense, but much more so in others. The author says: "And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit, I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice. And she gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug trees, and precious stones."†

It is quite proper to say that there was no queen in existence who had it in her power to make such presents. The gold alone, estimated at £4. per ounce, would be worth £720,000. in modern value, and when the value of spices, and precious stones, and other gifts are estimated, the total value would exceed many millions. And what part of the world could she have come from to be so much astonished at the buildings of Solomon? From "Zemen" she came, so it is said, and Zemen (South) is the happy valley of Arabia, the one part where spices, coffee, &c., are obtained in rich abundance. But who imagines that any queen of Zemen could ever be capable of possessing so much wealth? And if she possessed it, do we not know that she must have known of the Egyptian buildings, which as far surpassed the works of Solomon as the architecture of the British Museum surpasses that of Little Zion Chapel in Hog Lane. We cannot deny that which we see, or refuse our assent to a demonstrated proposition, and when told that this queen was astonished at such petty buildings, then our answer is, either she was not what she is said to have been, queen of a people in Arabia or Abyssinia, or the story is totally untrue. All the dresses and religious processions about which she was so much astonished were but poor reproductions of Egyptian splendour—they were imitations, even to the style of dress, the form of the ark, and the order of the march, but came no nearer the original than does the celebration of High Mass in Balroony to that of St. Peter's at Rome.

The whole narrative is an interpolation. If the reader will read the last three verses of the ninth chapter of the First Book of Kings, and then pass on to the eleventh verse of the tenth chapter, he will not fail to perceive the connection of the two points. Then, in the thirteenth verse, he will find that Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba what she asked, after which she returned to her own country.

* Kittó's Daily Bible illus. vol. 4. p. 120.

† 1 Kings x. 2-11.

As the narrative was originally written, it ran on as I have intimated, and contained only this latter notice of the Queen of Sheba, but as time passed on one of the idle stories about her visit was foisted on to the text, literally wedged in, and in such a manner as to destroy the sense. Thus I treat all that earlier part of the tenth chapter (verses 1 to 10) as nothing more than a fiction, which was not even known to the original writer. It was a little story intended to illustrate an allusion in the text, and has no more historical value than thousands of a similar character found in the ancient histories.

Solomon was never great as a warrior. His reign was hailed as the reign of peace, but he is represented as multiplying to himself chariots and horses. In one passage* we are informed that he had "forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen." In another passage† it is said, "Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen, and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jerusalem." But in the corresponding chapter in Chronicles‡ it is said, "Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, whom he bestowed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem." Evidently these passages are hopelessly corrupt, and remembering what has previously been said of war chariots, as well as what may be gleaned from ancient history, we feel that Solomon could not have become possessed of even the smaller number here stated. In Egypt, where the breeding of horses was carried on upon the most extensive scale, and from whence Solomon was supplied, they did not bring so many into the field. The army of Pharaoh, which is supposed to have gone out after Moses is only alleged to have had 600 chariots. The great Shishak, who desolated Jerusalem a few years after the death of Solomon, and who plundered the temple, only brought 1200 chariots up to battle. Sisera, of whom so much was said because of his chariots, had only 900. The Syrians of Mesopotamia had but 700, and the great Hadadazer only 1000. These are all Bible accounts, and when we turn aside to general history we find these numbers verified. As, for instance, Xenophon in one of his works, the Expedition of Cyrus, gives the number of cavalry as 120,000, and of chariots 2000. Such facts are powerful as evidences against the story, unless we are prepared to assume, with Bishop Watson, that "in this, as in other matters, the great increase was the result of the special assistance of God," which, of course, is a form of criticism that gets rid of one difficulty by proposing a greater, where anything like reason is active. Unfortunately, too, for this theory, it is opposed by the command of Moses, "that kings were not to multiply horses,"§ and it is believed by all old writers that the people were displeased with Solomon "for trusting to horses and chariots." So that while we doubt the statement made in Kings and Chronicles respecting the numbers, we do not doubt the fact that he had horses, with chariots of war, but as to how many, how they were fitted up, how distributed, and by whom they were driven, we are unable to give any distinct account.

The story of his wives and concubines is hardly worth relating. It is set forth in the record, that "king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father."|| The sin here imputed to him lay not in the having so many wives, but in permitting them "to turn away his heart from Jehovah." Modern writers who feel themselves called upon to enter the lists in favour of this man, endeavour

* 1 Kings, iv. 26.

† Ibid. x. 26.

‡ 2 Chron. ix. 26.

§ Deuteronomy, xvii. 16.

|| 1 Kings, xi. 1-4.

thus to represent it, but without sufficient cause. There is nothing in the text to indicate that the number of wives and concubines have anything to do with the being imperfect before God. The idea in the mind of the Hebrew was that he had sinned in taking unto himself the daughters of the wicked Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, and others belonging to the heathen tribes, and had sacrificed to their gods. Had he slain them all, in their youth and beauty, the author would have been proud to tell of the deed as one of the most glorious. The intolerant are never capable of perceiving truth or brotherhood; and the Hebrew would not have cared if Solomon had prostituted one half the daughters of his tribe. Men of one idea are always thus unjust. They argue a virtue into such prominence as to make it a vice to give it any support; they contend for the right until, by their undue dwelling upon it, they impair the force of other rights; and if they cannot procure that at which they are aiming without some great sacrifices, they will immolate a nation rather than abandon the object of their idolatry. It was so with the French Revolution of the last century; a body of men gained power who were Republicans, and so much were they resolved upon succeeding that they were ready to hew off the heads of all who opposed them—they would have a Republic even if all the citizens had to be slain in order to secure its establishment. So with the Hebrew author of this narrative; unto him there was nothing more important than the hatred and the slaughter of all the heathen. Not that he loved Jehovah, but because he loved himself, and was as proud of being an Hebrew as the red man was of being a Delaware, authorised to use the paint of his tribe, and with no better reason. He thus condemned Solomon not for his lust and sensual life, but because he ventured to bring into his harem so many foreign women.

But although the writer of this book, composing his narrative centuries after the death of Solomon, believed in the story of all these wives and concubines, we are not to believe it. He "had seven hundred wives, princesses,"—where did he get them? Not around the Mediterranean, for evidently, had he exhausted the stock, he could not have collected so many. Moreover, although it may be possible that some of the neighbouring monarchs may have given Solomon a sister to wife, it is quite certain that he was not in a position to gain so many princesses. The nation had but too recently emerged from barbarism to have gained any renown in the East, and hence the utter absurdity of supposing that foreign kings wished to ally themselves with it. A later writer would very naturally wish this, the same as many Saxon writers have spoken of the great desire foreign monarchs had to be allied with our Mighty Ancestors. It is, however, only a dream, for which no single fact can be cited. My own convictions are that the harem itself is quite imaginary; that Solomon, with all his folly, was never so utterly foolish as to take so many into his house. He may have had several, but certainly, as we are sure, he had not seven hundred princesses, because there was no such number for him to have, so also am I certain that he possessed not the three hundred concubines generally spoken of as his.

According to the narrative, which, as we have seen, must be taken with many important deductions, the immense expenditure connected with such splendour involved him in very serious difficulties, which even the profits of his mercantile transactions did not cover. For, although we abandon the fables about his "two targets of gold," his "three hundred shields of pure gold," his "drinking vessels of gold," his "throne of ivory overlaid with gold," and his "cedar palaces;" although, as guided by common sense, we abandon these fables as being nothing more than the creation of a later age, still the fact will stand that, from the form of the fables, we are justified in concluding that Solomon was a spendthrift, and that he unduly exhausted upon objects of mere pleasure and splendour, the means a nation so small and unproductive could place at his disposal. There were no means of raising a Customs or Exise income, as there is in modern times. Hence the need for direct taxation, which rankled deeply in the Hebrew heart. Taxes are not pleasant to any, but they seem to have been particularly hateful to the subjects of Solomon. Even then the believers in Jehovah believed also in a good margin for profit, and when they were to be taxed they complained bitterly. This taxing

was partly in actual property and partly in their personal service, but in other forms it was felt to be grievous. When Solomon was dead, and when his son went to Shechem to be received as king by the ten tribes, they came and said, by their deputies: "Thy father made our yoke grievous; now, therefore, make thou the grievous service of thy father, and the yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee."* Thus of their discontent we are certain, but cannot say if it were made manifest during the reign of Solomon.

The luxuriousness and taxation of the people were not, however, looked upon by the chronicler of his reign as constituting Solomon's sins. These sins were in going after other Gods. "And it came to pass when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David, his father."† The falling below the piety of David must have been a fearful fall, seeing that David himself in every practical sense was far below the ordinary level of piety. But the peculiarity observable in this account lies in the fact, that the foolish and despotic reign of Solomon was not accounted a sin; had he not gone after Ashtaroath or Milcom, then all had been well, for, as it was conceived by the author, sin wore only an ecclesiastical appearance. Cruel wrong done to the people—despotising over them—was nothing; for, as the case is here represented, Heaven only punished the wrong done to itself. And of a piece with this is the after statement that, through this sin, God resolved to divide Israel. The words are attributed to God, but, as we feel, very falsely. The account is: "And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel who had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other Gods, but he kept not that which the Lord commanded. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant nor my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it unto thy servant. Nevertheless in thy days I will not do it for David, thy father's sake, but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom, but will give one tribe to thy son for David, my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen."‡ How all this was said we, as usual, are not informed. Was it in a dream? Was it in the open day, and the voice heard in the air? Orthodox criticism does not trouble itself to ask in what way it was said, believing indeed that it is very wicked for any to venture upon such questions. But, curiously enough, when the same men come upon passages in the Koran where it is set forth that the Lord said, they immediately inquire, 'How did he say it?' and the Mussulman who declines to furnish an explanation, is accounted as a rogue who makes pretences to believing that which he does not believe, or as a fool who 'is blinded and deceived by the wicked one.'

But it matters little to ask how God said all this; we know He never said it. The entire passage contains a foul calumny against the moral government of God. He is literally represented as saying to Solomon, 'You have done wrong and deserve punishment, but I will punish your son instead; you should lose the kingdom, but for my servant David's sake you shall not lose it, but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son, at least, part of it, for thy son shall be allowed to retain part of it.' But how was this punishing Solomon for his sins? Was not this decreeing punishment unto the guiltless people, and letting the guilty king escape? Is God a respecter of persons? And, moreover, why divide and thus weaken the kingdom, why ruin the nation—the chosen nation—because of the sin of the king? Was Israel to be ruined because of the bad conduct of a king whom God had given them, and that, too, without allowing them to exercise any choice in the matter? If they had chosen him they would have been responsible, but, according to the story, God set him up. Shall we punish and ruin the Canadians, because of the errors or sins of a Governor whom we have given them by the exercise of our absolute authority? Surely not punish the people, but the sinner who had made them suffer, as much as he had insulted the Divinity. Obviously if there were any

* 1 Kings xii. 4.

† Ibid. xi. 4.

‡ Ibid. xi. 9-13.

sin in this case it must be imputed to Jehovah, and consequently the people must rather be pitied than condemned as deserving punishment.

Our commentators are wholly silent upon these important matters, which are, in truth, the very points upon which a measure of light should be cast. For is it not utterly impossible, consistent with the theory of a moral government, to believe that God would deliberately plan the division, and hence the destruction of this people, for any such sin on the part of a king Himself had given? Are nations to Him of less value than individuals? But in good sooth it is useless to argue a point when every right-thinking man will at once perceive, that to provide the division of Israel, because of the sin of idolatry on the part of Solomon, was to inflict a death-punishment upon Israel for the misfortune of having been governed by a bad king; and that to put off the punishment until after the death of Solomon, was absolutely to provide a punishment which could not take effect until the guilty one was far beyond its reach. Old writers, men trained into obedience to the Church and king, were likely enough—because they dared not to reason out these points—to be deceived by such statements; but we do not believe that God respects kings a whit above subjects. We, who believe that He never specially interferes, much less to punish the guiltless, cannot lend ourselves to the propagation of a statement so slanderous to the justice of the Eternal, and dare not bow our souls in submissive credulity for the benefit of Churches who live by enforcing faith in such falsehoods. Neither are we to be turned from our criticism by the pious sneerers who ask if we know all the secrets of God, and are authorised by Him to say how He would act in every case brought before Him! We pretend to no such private knowledge, and we equally deny the pretensions of all others. But although we cannot say how God would act in all cases, we can say, as even the orthodox critics do, how He would not act. When we read of what God did, as his actions are recorded in the Vedas, the Koran, or in the Old Chronicles, we reject the statements, and say, God could not act thus. Our moral nature rises into rebellion against the assumptions, and hence our denial of the stories. And precisely so with the story here related. If asked how God should have dealt with Solomon, we should decline to answer, as beyond our province. All the facts are not before us, and therefore our judgment would be fallacious. We know not, neither do we care to enquire. But when we are told that God being angry with Solomon, resolved to wait until after he was dead, and then punish the nation by rending it in twain; we answer at once that the story is false. Our moral nature revolts against its injustice, our sense of eternal right is insulted, and we say God would not depart so far from the path of eternal justice as to do this evil thing; therefore we give it up as a libel, although admitting that, written as it was in the days of gloom and darkness, it is very probable the writers believed it to be true, in common with much else which the better knowledge and riper wisdom of a more enlightened time compel all thoughtful men to reject. The sooner all men learn that these Biblical stories belong to the superstitions of the Past, and allow them to pass to their proper place among such, the better will it be for humanity.

(To be continued.)

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WITCHCRAFT AND THE CHURCH.

It is customary in modern times to treat contemptuously the stories told by superstitious persons relating to how they have been bewitched, and how, in various forms, "a devil has possessed one of our neighbours." The majority of educated persons feel considerable difficulty in understanding how such absurdities can be credited by any human being; still it is an undeniable fact that they are believed by thousands, and equally true that the various Churches of Christendom, in the persons of their ministers, laboured their hardest to maintain the theory of demoniacal possession as one among "the many verities necessary to be admitted in order to secure Christian salvation." If we no longer hang and burn ugly old men and women for the crime of being witches, the fact is to be attributed, not to the influence of the Churches, but to the spread of clearer and more scientific ideas relating to the actual phenomena of the universe—ideas which were originally promulgated by men who were accursed by the Churches, and which have triumphed despite the severest censures of ecclesiastical authority.

It is only through being totally ignorant of the facts, that any man can speak of the Church as having assisted to prevent the continuance of witch prosecutions. As well might it be said that Sir Robert Peel and the Protectionists were the authors or willing abettors of the repeal of the odious Corn Laws. That, as Prime Minister, Sir Robert did this is well known; but it is equally certain that he did so only after it had been demonstrated to be impossible with safety to pursue any other course. It was unwillingly done, and never would have been accomplished but for the resolution of a party acting entirely independent of the Government. And it is precisely the same with the Church and these prosecutions. It abandoned them, but not until the common sense of the most influential and best men in the country had protested against them, and had refused to be any longer outraged by such proceedings. While it was possible, consistent with safety, they were continued; still we do not say that they who persisted in urging them on were consciously wrong, for the opposite is our conviction. But if they were not criminal they were incompetent, and evidently they had not sought very earnestly after the truth. When by others the truth was discovered, then, instead of examining it, they denounced without inquiring, and anathematised

without being able to assign a single reliable reason. So that, although we admit they believed themselves to be right, we still maintain that they were morally guilty, because they did not take such steps as would have led them to perceive the error of their ways.

Had it not been for the clergy the fearful sacrifice of life caused throughout Europe during this terrible mania would never have occurred. It was the leading clerics who impressed the belief upon the common mind. Tatian says that "Demons are the founders of idolatry, and to satisfy their pride they allow themselves to be worshipped by their heathen followers as if they were Gods;"* and according to him they worked all manner of evil through taking possession of their unhappy victims. Clement declared them to be the supporters of all magical arts; and according to Tertullian "through their fine organisation they were enabled to act equally upon the body and the soul." The latter author maintained the doctrine of exorcism, and taught how, by means of the cross, the demon could be expelled. Theodoret relates that the Bishop of Syria, Marcellus, with the help of the Mayor, endeavoured to destroy with fire a temple of Jupiter, but "was prevented by a great black devil," which put out the flame. Eventually the bishop put a cask of water upon the high altar, and when he had offered up prayers, and made the sign of the cross, the water burnt like oil, and the idol temple was utterly destroyed.† Gregory of Tours relates that during some of the festivals "demoniacs appeared in the churches raving, so that they terrified the congregations, and broke the lamps, but as soon as the consecrated oil fell upon them the demons departed out of them and they became themselves again."‡

The theory they acted upon was this, that there were thousands, or even millions, of evil spirits, demons, who acted under the direction of wizards and witches in taking possession of innocent persons, thereby causing them to suffer variously, as fearfully diseased, or to commit the most heinous crimes, and do such things as wrung tears from the eyes of all good spirits. These demons were held to be impalpable to the sight of all save those who had entered into the unholy league, and to be the absolute slaves of those who had done so. In the celebrated Warbois case this fact was clearly brought out. In that case Joan Throgmorton happened to pass the cottage of "old mother Samuel," who was sitting at her door knitting. She was old and ugly, and when Joan, a nervous imaginative girl, looked at her, she felt, or fancied "she felt, sudden pains in her limbs," and concluded that she had been bewitched. Her brothers and sisters, parents, and a few neighbours, entered into the case, and believed that they also were sufferers. Upon one occasion they attacked the old woman, and having pricked her most brutally, "Lady Cromwell tore a handful of hair from her head" which she gave to Mrs. Throgmorton as a specific against all the spells of witchcraft.

The poor old woman bitterly cursed her tormentors, and it happened that on several occasions after this attack "Lady Cromwell dreamt of the witch and an old black cat," and died "exactly" fifteen months after the day of torment and cursing. This was looked upon as furnishing proof positive of Mother Samuel's guilt. She was apprehended and tortured, and naturally enough induced to say anything in order to escape torment. It was demanded that she should exorcise the demon she had caused to take possession of Joan; and she complied, saying: "As I am a witch and the causer of Lady Cromwell's death, I charge thee, fiend, to come out of her!" This done, the poor old

* *Orat. ad Græc.*

† *Eccles. Hist. lib. v. c. 81.*

‡ *Ennemoser's History of Magic, vol. II. p. 142.*

woman "confessed" that her husband and daughter were leagued with her in witchcraft, and the result was that all three were tried at Huntingdon and executed.

The great mass of Englishmen believed in their guilt, neither can the fact be wondered at when it is remembered that the most learned prelates maintained that the land was full of wizards, witches, and demons. Bishop Jewell generally concluded his services before Queen Elizabeth with praying that she might be preserved from unholy spells. In 1598 he said, "It may please your Grace to understand that witches and sorcerers within these last four years are marvellously increased within this your Grace's realm. Your Grace's subjects pine away even unto the death; their colour fadeth—their flesh rotteth—their speech is benumbed—their senses are bereft! I pray God they may never practise farther than upon the subject."*

It has been boasted that in England this witch mania was less powerful than in other countries; and there is truth in the boast, although even here no less than 40,000 persons were put to death for this imaginary crime during the seventeenth century. On the Continent the butcheries were far more numerous. In the city of Geneva above 500 persons were burnt in two years, and in Como, in 1524, above 1000 suffered death in the same manner. One Inquisitor, Remegius, took credit to himself for that, during fifteen years he had convicted and sent 900 to the fire. Springer, in Germany, sent 500 to the flames in one year, and for many years he was engaged in discovering and dooming new victims.

In modern times the would-be leaders of the people have discovered that the "period of the end draweth nigh;" one of the proofs of which they say "lies in the spread of infidelity." Such men are sure to find proof, or to imagine it, if they have any opinion to support. In the Dark Ages the proof of the times of Antichrist being nigh was supposed to lie in the spread of witchcraft. Florimund says: "All who have afforded us signs of the coming Antichrist agree that the increase of sorcery and witchcraft is to distinguish the melancholy period of his advent; and was ever any age afflicted as ours is? The seats destined for criminals in our courts of justice are blackened with persons accused of this crime, and there are not judges enough to try them. Our dungeons are gorged with them. No day passes that we do not render our tribunals bloody by the dooms which we pronounce, or in which we do not return to our homes discountenanced and terrified at the horrible confessions which we have heard. And the devil is accounted so good a master, that we cannot commit so great a number of his slaves to the flames, but what there shall arise from their ashes a sufficient number to supply their places."

That was not always the case, for it sometimes happened that whole villages and districts were depopulated. In the early part of the thirteenth century there was a considerable body of people known as the Stedingers, who inhabited the country districts from the Weser to the Zuydersee, who had maintained free institutions. They admitted the supremacy neither of bishops nor nobles, but managed their own affairs by the aid of elected deputies, who voted taxes and attended to all matters of national importance. They were hateful in the eyes of their clerical superiors, who could not tamely submit to see a body of freemen conduct their own affairs without the aid either of bishop or noble. Various means of an infamously oppressive character were vainly resorted to for their reduction to a condition of servitude; but having

* Mackay's *Memoirs of Extraordinary Delusions*, vol. II. p. 124.

enjoyed freedom they fought bravely in its defence. It was at length found necessary to denounce them as wizards, as children of the devil, so that all Europe should be induced to take up arms against them, and by this means they were destroyed.

The Pope was appealed to, and he issued his exhortation to all Europe to take up arms against them. In his letters he said: "The Stedingers, seduced by the devil, have abjured all the laws of God and man, slandered the Church, insulted the holy sacraments, consulted witches to raise evil spirits, shed blood like water, taken the lives of priests, and concocted an infernal scheme to propagate the worship of the devil, whom they adore under the name of Asmodi. The devil appears to them in different shapes—sometimes as a goose or a duck, and at others in the figure of a pale black-eyed youth, with a melancholy aspect, whose embrace fills their hearts with eternal hatred against the holy Church of Christ. This devil presides at their sabbaths, when they all kiss him and dance around him. He then envelops them in total darkness, and they all, male and female, give themselves up to the grossest and most disgusting debauchery."*

The result was that an army of "forty thousand crusaders" marched against them, against which they could only oppose ten thousand. The battle, fought at Altenesch, A.D. 1234, was fierce, but it ended disastrously for the Stedingers, who left above eight thousand dead upon the field.† After the battle the villages were handed over to the noble crusaders, who, in the name of God, slew all the inhabitants, old and young, male and female, and then "gave God thanks for the victory." Thus, under the charge of demonism, these free men were slain, and it was under the same charge that the once mighty Knights Templars fell. Philip of France urged that charge against them, and rejoiced on one occasion when seventy of their number were roasted by a slow fire outside of Paris. When the Reformation commenced this charge was frequently preferred, in order to get rid of those who had forsaken the Church. Scores of thousands of Protestants were burnt as wizards and witches; but in their turn they measured out the same to the Catholics. Thus, the belief in demons was employed by men of all sects, in order to get rid of their enemies, and equally so in order to blot out civil freedom. They spread the mantle of fear over all, and what we have to marvel at is this, that while there was so much to deter them, our ancestors should have been brave enough to do battle with an enemy so strongly entrenched and so unscrupulous. Their valour and spirit of self-sacrifice has no fair parallel in ancient history, and none will be furnished in the modern days of enlightenment.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XV.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI.

OF all the Saints of the Romish Calendar, there is none whose memory remains more vividly impressed upon the common mind of those countries where the ancient faith is still generally confessed, or more noteworthy as having left his mark upon the world, than St. Francis of Assisi, the founder of the Order of Franciscan Mendicants. In judging him, it is necessary to guard against starting with any foregone conclusion by reason of his having

* Mackay's *Memoirs of Extraordinary Delusions*, vol. ii. p. 111.

† Meusel's *Hist. of Germany*, c. 167.

attained the very equivocal honour of canonization, and to remember that a man may have a large mixture of fanaticism in the nature of him, and yet be something more than a mere fanatic; may be an abnormal man, without being a madman; a "saint," yet not a rogue; a monkish mendicant, and yet a good man. Born in Assissi, in the year 1182, the son of a wealthy merchant there, Peter Bernadone by name, he was early in life led by religious enthusiasm to relinquish the immense inheritance which his father had spent a lifetime in amassing; renouncing all worldly wealth, to his father's great disgust, he embraced poverty in her most abject form, and determined to live by mendicancy. In doing this he had a purpose to fulfil, from which nor fear of father, nor love of mother, nor reproaches of friends, nor jibes nor sneers, nor insults of divers kinds, which he had to suffer, could cause him to swerve. There was within him an iron will which nought could conquer; but there was a tender conscience, a depth of love, and a capacity of self-sacrifice, seldom, perhaps never, equalled, in which lay the secret of his action.

Young Francis Bernadone had, from the comfort and luxury of his father's dwelling, looked forth upon the dirt and squalor, the misery and wretchedness, of the very poor in the cities and towns of his time; he had seen, or fancied he had seen, that they no longer believed in the Church, whose ministers were too lofty to visit them, and whose luxury and wealth seemed to place a bar between them and these poor ones. It must be remembered, in order that we may understand the position of the poorer classes amongst those who dwelt in the cities of that age, that, while the country was allotted into parishes, and pastors found subsistence from the living attached to their office, in the towns, which had but lately grown up, this was not the case. The town-guilds and trade societies had their chaplains, but the class who belonged to no guilds was left immersed in poverty and filth; no kind word was spoken to them, and they were without those consolations which, reasonably or unreasonably, men find in religion. And Francis asked himself, Is this right? He looked, too, and saw thousands of miserable lepers, outcast and excommunicate; no one to assist their distress, punished for approaching the habitations of men, and literally treated worse than dogs, because they were diseased; and again Francis asked, Is this the charity Christ taught? The idea then took possession of him, that if he divested himself of his wealth, and went amongst these outcast wretched ones, as one of themselves, he might be able, by kindly word and deed, to do somewhat for them. It was not, however, without a natural abhorrence that Francis undertook this work; but, having arrived at the conclusion that it was right that it should be done, his will was strong enough to carry him through in doing it. One day he met a leper, and feeling a natural disgust, we are told that he schooled himself by kissing the wounds. Fanaticism and folly! cry some. Perhaps so, but something more. The monkish chroniclers tell of how the man was made whole by that kiss. "Whether shall we most admire the miraculous power, or the courageous humility of that kiss?" asks Bonaventura. True. The moral miracle of the kiss is greater than the fabled miracle of the cure, even though it were a reality, and no fable.

Yes! St. Francis undertook to do a work that the Church had failed to do. The Church had been seeking after riches, its bishops and its priests were lapped in luxury; the great idea of Hildebrand had been travestied in the creation of a Church powerful for evil, not as he would have had it—powerful for good. The Crusades had been preached in the interests of Priestcraft, and had produced results far other than the Church had antici-

pated—had roused the intelligence of Europe, and set it in opposition to the Church; had set men thinking, and, as a consequence, asking strange questions. It was at this juncture that the Waldensian and Albigensian heresies grew strong, and were met by the attempt, on the part of the Church, to crush them out; Dominic was the first to see that the better way to meet the advance of heresy would be to preach against it, and create a class of preachers who should, in their purity of life and eloquence, rival the heretic preachers. As yet, however, the idea of creating an Order had not been entertained by him; Francis preceded him in the foundation of his Order; the Franciscans dating from 1209, the Dominicans from 1215.

As the opposers of heresy, Dominic and his order naturally became the great agents of persecution. For Francis and his, a nobler task was open; his idea was not to preach against heresy, but to go into the polluted dens of the great cities, and preach a knowledge of God to them who knew Him not—to rescue from their abject misery that portion of mankind which hitherto had been neglected. He started single-handed in this work, but soon gained several companions; although it should be understood that the entire scheme afterwards worked out by him was gradually formed. Many sneers have been passed on Francis, both in his own time and since, by priests and theologians, for that he, without any book-learning, without any knowledge of theology, should presume to undertake the task of preaching; perhaps, if those who sneered had not neglected their duty, he would not have begun a work which none but himself would do. But to sneerers of that class let it ever be said, and the careers of such men as Francis Bernadone in the mediæval times, and George Fox at a later period, show the saying to be true, that earnestness is the true means of success, and that without it the greatest erudition will not avail to rouse the sluggish souls of men to a sense of God and duty. The Church, with all its learning, had failed, and now the "ignorant layman," Francis, was to try what he could do.

It was not long before Francis had companions in the work he had undertaken; the first who joined him was Bernard de Quintavalle, a fellow-townsmen of Francis, and a man of wealth and distinction. Led by his admiration of the sublime self-sacrifice of Francis in giving up all worldly wealth, and devoting himself to the spiritual elevation and physical amelioration of the wretched and outcast, Bernard determined to assist him in his work. "Tell me," said Bernard to Francis, on meeting him after having formed this resolution, "if a slave should receive from his master a treasure which he finds to be useless to him, what should he do with it?" "Let him restore it to his master." "Lo! then," said Bernard, "I render back to God the earthly goods with which he has enriched me." "We will go together to church," said Francis, "and after hearing Mass we will ascertain His will." On their way there, Peter of Catania, one of the canons of the Cathedral Church of Assissi joined their company. These three (who must be looked upon as the first Franciscans) knelt before the altar, and then, proceeding after the superstitious manner of the age, went to the Bible to inquire of it as to the will of God. Francis opened it, and read, as the answer of the oracle thus consulted: "If ye will be perfect, go and sell all that ye have." A remarkable coincidence, if the tale be true. The determination of Bernard was thus confirmed, and Peter was accepted as their companion. No companionship was perfect in the Middle Age without a rule, and for the rule the Gospels were again consulted, and, in honour of the "Holy Trinity," they were opened three times. The first text read by Francis was

the same as before: "If ye will be perfect, go and sell all that ye have;" again the book is opened, and he reads: "Take nothing for your journey;" and once more opening, he reads: "He that would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." "You have heard, my brothers," says Francis, "what must be our rule of life, and the rule of all who join us. Let us obey the Divine command." Bernard and Peter accordingly fitted themselves for their vocation by selling all that they had; and, clothing themselves in a coarse dress, similar to that of Francis, they retired with him to a hut on the plain of Rivo Torto. Six centuries have fled, but the work commenced by those three men still survives, as one of the elements of life, if not of progress, in the great Christian Commonwealth.*

Once, and once only in their lives, did Francis and Dominic meet; it was in Rome, whither they had both bent their steps in order to obtain the written approbation of the Pope for their Orders. An attempt was made by the Papal party to consolidate the two, and the two enthusiasts met on that business. "My brother, my companion," exclaimed the Spaniard, "let us unite our powers, and nothing shall prevail against us." But this was not to be, and it was well; for the mission and aim of Francis were very different to those of Dominic. We believe them both to have been honest, earnest, sincere men, to the extent of the light which they possessed; but beyond this they and their objects had nothing in common. Dominic represented the repressive spirit of the Church, the tendency to hold by the old and prevent the success of the new. If he advocated preaching, and established an order of preaching friars, it was solely with a fully expressed determination to prevent the spread of heresy, and to preach into the common mind a hate of heretics and a fear of the Pope. St. Francis represented a spirit which had grown up independent of the Church; he recalled to life an element in Christianity which the Church and Theology had long buried out of sight—the spirit of love and self-sacrifice; he had nothing to do with the Pope, and preached not so much the Papal idea, as the duty of brotherly love and Christian charity. Both Dominic and Francis would have died to save a heretic from damnation; but Dominic would have burned him first, while Francis would have poured burning words of love into his ear, and let him live. Both had the martyr-spirit; but with Dominic this arose from a logical perception of duty, or supposed duty, while with Francis it was the effluence of a soul filled with love and charity. The spirit of the two men, and the differences in them, may be seen in their careers. While Dominic was preaching and burning heretics in Languedoc, Francis was washing lepers and ministering to the spiritual and physical necessities of the poor and outcast in Assisi; both were working, as they thought, in the service of religion, and both committed grave mistakes, and took radically false views as to what religion is; but there is this great difference, that while Dominic had seized upon a lie, pure and simple, Francis had a half-truth—one, moreover, which his age needed to know more than any other. With these vast differences between the men, yet having some points of similarity, we understand how it was they parted, with mutual esteem, but unable to work together.

Though a Romish Saint, Francis of Assisi must be regarded in the light of a Reformer. He taught his age a noble truth, which it needed very much to learn. The pride of the hierarchy had created a great gulf between the Church and the common people; as a consequence, a spirit completely

* Stephens's Eccles. Biographies. St. Francis.

anti-sacerdotal had spread itself abroad in the cities of Europe, where various influences had contributed to make people think, and, therefore, unwilling to submit with that quiet resignation to the tyranny of the priest, which had been displayed in the earlier times. The cruel spirit of feudalism, too, was still active, and the miseries under which the "lower classes" groaned met with but little sympathy from the rich and powerful. Men perished of starvation by hundreds, and none heeded; the plague struck down its thousands, and none cared but to escape the contagion; leprosy pursued its fearful ravages among the poor and ill-fed, the Church excommunicated them, and the people cursed them. Poverty-stricken and diseased, the purlieus of the great cities were filled with these wretched multitudes, to whom life was a nightmare and death a relief, and no word of comfort, no sign of sympathy, reached them; while the priests of the Church fattened in their luxury, and the rich revelled in their wealth. A deep-seated hate of the hierarchy, finding its expression in the spread of heresies the main characteristic of which was an anti-sacerdotal spirit, and an equally deep-seated hate of the rich and powerful, afterwards to find expression in revolts of the peasantry, in the Jacquerie, and other ways, existed among the people. The Church sought to put this down with the strong hand, by Albigensian Crusades and the Inquisition, and partially succeeded. But Francis saw a deeper truth, and taught his age that Christianity demanded love and self-sacrifice; he and his companions went among the wretched and the outcast, and offered them sympathy and help. That he did this in the interests of the Church in no way detracts from his merit; nor is he, therefore, the less entitled to the name of a Reformer.

St. Francis taught the religion of self-sacrifice, and did for his age much the same thing as Wesley and Whitfield did for England a century ago—that is, he raised the down-trodden, brutalised portion of humanity to a sense of their position as human beings, taught the outcast and degraded that they had souls, and were men and brothers. But he did more than that, he taught thousands of the rich and powerful that it was their duty to help these their wretched fellow-men; and obtained the sanction of the Head of the Church to a movement which, but for that sanction, would have become a more widespread and dangerous heresy than any which preceded it. True, he for a time strengthened the Papacy by this means; but is that a thing to be regretted? We think not, considering what must have been the result of continuing a contest such as that which had saturated the fair plains of Languedoc with human blood. The Church was yet too powerful to be crushed; and St. Francis seems to us to have done good service to humanity in bringing within the pale of the Church a movement which was one of progress. His work was closely related to the Reformation; and if he served the Church, he served mankind also.

JAS. L. GOODING.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 2.—EARLY LIFE OF SAKYA.

THE Buddha of whom it is our present purpose to speak was born near Lucknow in the year 623 B.C., and was the son of the Rajah, or petty king, of Kapila. The Buddhists are profoundly convinced that this was not his first entrance upon life; on the contrary, they hold that he had previously moved upon the earth as a fly, a rat, a cock, a frog, a dog, a horse, and in other lowly

forms.* They believe, also, that he had lived as a thief, an outcast, a beggar, an ascetic, and many times as a king. Through all these forms of being he had passed, because of his resolve to become the highest in the world of wisdom; but this birth as Buddha was to be the last before attaining to supreme blessedness (Nirvana).

The believers maintain that, of his own free will, he descended from heaven as a ray of light into the womb of his earthly mother Maya. Thus, although he was not the son of a virgin mother, he was supernaturally conceived. The narratives set forth that, instead of being born in the usual manner, he stepped from the side of his mother, and declared himself to be the greatest personage upon earth, besides doing many things not here describable, which caused all who were acquainted with the facts to believe what he said. There were many marvels to mark both his conception and birth.† All the solar system testified its joy, because of his conception, by becoming supernaturally illuminated, and, in consequence of this, thousands of sick persons were instantly healed; the blind received their sight, the deaf recovered their hearing, and all nature co-operated with man to testify its unbounded joy—even the storms were hushed, the big, angry waves lay placidly beneath the glorious light, and from the sky itself rich garlands came to decorate the jubilant earth.‡

It is not for us to repudiate these marvels; neither can a nation that believes so much of the marvellous refuse to examine the evidence upon which the Buddhists base their faith. Still, however, there is one little objection to rendering unlimited confidence to such wonders, which lies in the fact that his relatives and friends did not believe in them; or, at least, if they once believed, they soon forgot them, and in the manner of his education acted precisely the same as if nothing of a marvellous kind had occurred. They forgot how "greatly the heavens and the earth trembled at the moment when he was born;" forgot how "the Gods themselves, and even the demons, hurried toward the place to render him services;" forgot how bountifully from the sky flowers were rained down, and the air was filled with perfume so rare that mortal senses had never previously known anything so rich and beautiful; they forgot how over and around where he was born meteors and falling stars were rained down in glorious profusion; they forgot the many pious hermits who came from afar to render their homage to the new-born child; they forgot, also, that "the wise Narada, taking the child in his arms as in a cradle, wept when speaking how near was the hour of his own death, but rejoiced loudly when declaring the future greatness of him whom he held in his arms."§

Probably the greatest wonder of all lay in the possibility of forgetting so many marvels; but seeing that men generally believe both Joseph and Mary to have forgotten various remarkable occurrences, they will hardly object to believing this. Yet, although forgotten by them, they have been recorded in the Thibetian Sacred Books for the benefit of all ages. In the same books we read that, when the wonderful boy was but young, he had acquired all the knowledge the wisest were capable of conveying, and so far outstripped all his competitors that they had no chance of becoming as wise as he; in the world of knowledge he had become a master, as by birth he was made one in the world of power. Friends pressed him to marry, and the beautiful

* Hardy, pp. 90-100.

† Foe-koue-ki. 220, 228.

‡ Upham's Sacred Books, vol. iii. p. 144; Cosma Korosi, *Life of Sakya*; Asiatic Researches, vol. xx.

§ Asiatic Researches, vol. xx. pp. 234-240.

Gossa was chosen to be his bride. "She was all that could be wished for in a wife," and when children came to bless and make their union closer, people looked on and said, Behold the happy ones! They had all that Eastern life could hope for, all the bounty that it yields, and as, according to the course of nature, it seemed certain that in a few years Sakya would mount the throne of his father, his lot seemed to be the most blissful and prosperous it was possible for any human being to conceive.

Thus, then, this future teacher was educated, married, called a father; and, so far as Eastern life was concerned, was supplied with all that the eye could wander after, all that the heart could desire. Beauty and plenty smiled upon him, and, as we have said, it seemed to all outside that no condition of life, no prospect of the future, could be more desirable than his. But not so did it seem unto himself. The world was not unto him the mere hotel that it appeared unto others. He had been married some years, and neither found nor hinted of cause to complain of his beautiful Gossa; but, although it was unuttered, she found abundant cause for sorrow. Her lord was not well—yet who could say that he was ill? He was evidently ill within. His bosom's lord sat not lightly on its throne. All without was cheerful, but all within was dark and troublous. There was something preying upon his inner life, so that he could not be gay—to spend a few hours, as aforetime, in gaiety and gladness, seemed to have become utterly impossible to him; he could not enter with spirit into either the sports or general sensual delights of his equals. When opportunity offered, he stole away from the court and wandered alone, pondering upon the mysteries of Nature, with her ever-weaving, ever-consuming forces. Unto him the question came, Why are all things so beautiful, and peaceful, and good?—then, looking unto himself, he asked wherein he was superior to his slaves—what he had done whereby to merit so much honour—wherein greater, that he should be set up by the heavens as the master of many superior to himself.

Such questions, when once they rise, must be well answered; for, if they remain unnoticed, then, indeed, nothing can prosper with the inquirer, who will sink back into animalism and nothingness. In a practical way, and assisted by the accidents of life, these queries were resolved. Upon one occasion, mounted in his chariot, drawn by four white steeds, the prince was coursing his way to the pleasure-gardens, where, as usual, he intended to pass a few meditative hours. This day, however, he was checked in his course, on perceiving an old, decrepid, grey-headed, and toothless man, tottering feebly along with a staff. That he had seen old men—worn-out old men, before, none can doubt; but never so closely with the mental eye as to realise the lesson they teach. The sight that day so impressed him that he stayed to converse with the wanderer, and was fully satisfied, ere the brief chat had closed, that "man must decay." This was the uppermost idea. However strong, hale, and lightsome, born into poverty or born into wealth, there is the one fate for all—decay is allotted unto us all, and from its power there is no escape. Why, then, care so much for the world, when we must fall into the sere and yellow leaf, and move as snails, where once we moved with the fleetness of the mountain roe? True, indeed, that such a matter is trite, but here is a man who will extract somewhat from it—who will go into its very heart, and try if there be any release, or any power, through the mind, of rising superior to the evil. Say there is none—say that to this we are all born; still, by mastering it in thought, this man will extract the sting from it in act, and will no longer fear its coming—will no more view it as an evil.

Unto him this evil becomes powerless directly he knows its true measure ; for only upon the unprepared do these natural evils operate as calamities. Another day he goes out, and, behold ! as he neared the pleasure-garden, his train came upon a poor and helpless one, who was nearly exhausted by the power of a burning fever. The man was lean and squalid ; there was no sign of hope or comfort about him ; and when the prince inquired about the cause of what he saw, he was answered and informed, by way of relieving him from painful emotion, that the sickness was common—was, in fact, nothing more than one of the calamities to which mortals, by their nature, are exposed. Such answers are commonly considered satisfactory by dull use-and-wont men, by all who look merely to the exterior, never into the heart of things. There were millions of men who saw their fellow-creatures disfigured and slain by means of the small-pox, without even dreaming of its being their duty to take up arms against it. The calamity had operated for ages, therefore it was still to operate ; they had not created, wherefore should they seek to conquer it ? Such were the thoughts of thousands, if ever they thought upon the subject. But eventually a Jenner looked upon the calamity, and resolved to become its master. He devoted himself to that particular field of battle, and gained his victory ; leaving, however, thousands of fields whereon others may gain quite as glorious a triumph as he gained.

But Sakya was not a Jenner ; he could not grasp a fever, and slay it from the face of the earth ; still he could not passively turn from the smitten one, content to say, " Such is the course of nature ! " To his followers he said : " Let us return speedily, for what wise man can rejoice in his health, when he " has before him the spectre of coming disease ? " * Probably Sakya may eventually discover that the wise man will, and should, " rejoice in his " health ; " and we cannot join the bilious theologians who select this passage as furnishing a proof that " he was fast becoming an Atheist. " They have never asked such questions, and, consequently, they have no independent life. Other men have drawn up a map of the road upon which the inquirer is to travel when such difficulties come before him ; and, by means of hedges of faith and guide-post articles, they have shown the way out of all such mazy questionings. The great evil, however, connected with their plan lies in the fact of every man losing his freedom who emerges according to their method. He comes out shorn of his locks, and not stronger, as he should do. Perhaps the best that can happen to a man under such circumstances is, that he shall have neither map nor guide, but just be left to find his own way out in the best trim and manner he can.

This seems to have been the fortune of Sakya, who could not yet solve the problem ; who could only meditate upon it, and try to solve it, which is the next blessed condition to that of knowing all things. For, after all, this is not merely a world for eating and drinking, as so many imagine ; neither is it a place in which, after certain mechanical methods, a man is to get the soul of him " saved. " Rightly viewed, it is a sphere in which we are to have our eyes opened and our powers of working fairly brought out. And he who can look upon the trembling old, or the fever-smitten young, as being books to be read, enigmas to be solved, has, at least, become conscious of a certain dignity of life, which will preserve him from descending lower in the scale of existence.—For the present, we shall leave Sakya busy trying to solve the mystery of sickness, and the folly of rejoicing in health.

P. W. P.

* *Bhiksha Topos.*

THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS PROGRESS.

THE least teachable of men are those who are the most profoundly convinced of their own exceeding wisdom. There is no hope of progress for those who have already arrived at the conclusion, that they have reached the goal after which other men are striving. Look where we will, whether into the great arena of history, or into the circle of our everyday acquaintance, it will be found that a conceited over-estimate of self is an ever-present accompaniment of ignorance, and its proximate cause. The nations which have estimated their own knowledge and power the highest have been those who have done the least for humanity. The men whom we all meet, who know everything, who have nothing to learn, are those whose opinions are the least worthy of attention, and who never do aught towards forwarding any great work in the world. Such nations have always the soonest declined; and such men are ever those who fall into contempt. Conceit never ends in aught but grief to the conceited; and the experience of all who know much of history, or of the world around them, furnishes a practical commentary on the saying, that he who exalteth himself shall be abased.

To perceive our ignorance, not to over-estimate our knowledge, is the highest wisdom, and the only possible road to truth. It is not until man sees his wants that he proceeds to make efforts to supply them. Not until he is fully alive to the fact, that there is much he knows not and yet may know, does he earnestly strive after a higher knowledge. "Know thy own ignorance," was the wise maxim of the philosopher of old, "for until then wisdom is not for thee." And this, which is so great a necessity, is also one of the most difficult things for man to do. Man is naturally egotistic, and ready to believe he knows all. It is so easy to lay the flattering unction to one's soul, that truth is already ours, and that to lay out our strength in a further search would be a waste of labour. It often takes a man a lifetime to learn how great is his ignorance; and thousands pass away without ever learning this—content to accept at second-hand other men's theories of life and of the universe, to be, in short, second editions—not revised and corrected even—of their fathers before them. Alas! for them, and alas! for those among whom they live. They never know what it is to truly live, and remain in the world dragehains on the wheels of progress, blots in creation, faithless to themselves, and stumbling blocks to other men.

What is true in this respect, of not perceiving their own ignorance, and consequently accepting error as truth, in the case of individuals, is no less true of the race. As it frequently takes a lifetime to learn the first step towards wisdom, so it took humanity thousands of years to learn, not truth and wisdom, but the only possible road to it. For thousands of years men went on assuming that their crude speculations, their imaginative theories, represented the facts of the Universe; that they knew all about the forces of Nature, and the modes of procedure by which the various phenomena in the world around them were produced; and, during all those thousands of years, no progress was made—none was possible. Down even to within three centuries of this present time men continued to repeat, and repeat as scientific truth, the mere imaginings of the men of old. The dicta of Aristotle were looked upon not as things to be questioned and to be proven, but things which must be accepted with unquestioning reverence. The truth had been discovered already, all possible wisdom belonged to men; and it was no less

foolish than rash to attempt to learn anything more, or to doubt the truth of what was taught. And so humanity remained unprogressive and superstitious; for what is superstition but the acceptance of error in the place of truth?

How, then, was all this altered? By the advent of men who dared to doubt, who refused to accept that as truth which they had not proven for themselves. The chief and representative man among these was Bacon, from the publication of whose "Novum Organon" we date all our scientific progress. And what was this "Novum Organon," what this new method? Simply this, To inquire. The new philosophy simply said to men: Deeming yourselves ignorant, go forth and gather facts; throw by your old theories, your imagined wisdom, and reverently question Nature as men knowing not, but wishful to learn and know. It was done, and the progress made during the last three centuries is the mighty result. And if we ask why men have progressed so wonderfully in knowledge since Bacon's time, we find the answer in the fact that they then for the first time began to admit their ignorance. And the fact stands as a mighty teaching for all future time, no less than for every man in the present time, that since that admission more knowledge is gained daily than was possible in the lapse of thousands of years before.

There is, however, one sphere of thought into which as yet the method of Bacon has not penetrated—that of Religion; and where, by consequence, superstition sits enthroned, and progress is looked upon as impossible. Theology, which pretends to be the science of religious truth, is ever at a standstill. The ignorance of a thousand years ago is paraded as the wisdom of to-day; and dogmatic assertion is made to stand in the place of proven truth. The theologian inverts the true process of thought. He begins, not by confessing his ignorance, but by asserting that he possesses the entire truth, knows all that can be known. Inquiry he treats not only as useless, but as absolutely wicked; because to assert the necessity of inquiry is to throw a doubt upon his assertion that he already knows all. The scientific method and the theological, are, therefore, at war. The scientific man says: I am ignorant of much, that which I have asserted as true I have rigorously proved to be true, I ask no man to accept what I say without inquiry; if a man doubt my propositions, I see in that only the necessity for further search and closer analysis, for the doubter may indeed be wiser than I. How different is the position taken by the theologian! He says: I speak with authority, what I say must be accepted without proof, for its truth is guaranteed by revelation from God Himself; if a man doubt my propositions he flies in the face of Heaven, and is deserving of damnation. And so it is that, in relation to religious truth, we are now just where our fathers were a thousand years ago; while, scientifically, we have been making untold progress. Religiously, we are beggared, while, in matters of scientific inquiry, we are ever becoming richer. Wise scientifically, we are religiously ignorant; our science and our theology are ever at war with each other.

Until this war ceases there is no hope of religious progress among our people. Our aim in this journal, and wherever and in whatever form we, as religious Reformers, are at work, is to impress this truth upon the minds of men; to point out and enforce this truth, that, until the same method is pursued in searching out the truth in matters of religion that has been followed with so much success in the world of science, religion and science must be at war. And what is involved in this? First and foremost, it too frequently leads men to look with contempt upon religion. Suppose some man, or set

of men, were to arise amongst us, and undertake to teach as truth the astrological and alchemical follies which were believed so piously five hundred years ago, what would be the feeling of those who had learned the well-proven facts of astronomy and chemistry? Would it not be that of contempt? And yet this is the very thing which is being done in the churches and chapels of the present day. They teach as religious truth things which science has disproved, and the natural and necessary result is that thousands look with contempt upon the teaching; or do, what is worse, palter with their consciences, become untrue to themselves, and, by a species of mental juggling, contrive to make themselves believe, or, at least, not openly to question, as religious truths, things which they know to be scientifically false. The man who does this, whether he knows it or not, and whether or not so called by the world, is a practical atheist; for such a man assumes, if he do not assert, that God is a Being capable of deceiving His creatures, and of requiring them to believe on the one hand what on the other he compels them to deny. The Churches have raised a howl over this as an age of doubt, and not without reason. It is an age of doubt, and they are mainly responsible for its being such. It would be better, however, if they would look at the practical atheism within themselves, rather than at the doubt without. We hail the doubt as the sign of progress, for out of doubt comes inquiry. The thing which is hopeless is that practical atheism which consents to accept a lie as God's truth. It is that, and not doubt, which stands in the way of religious progress; it is that which the Churches teach as religion; and it is that which, if not rooted out, will end in the spiritual death of this English people.

JAS. L. GOODING.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE LIFE AND CAREER OF SOLOMON.

(Concluded from p. 224.)

I REPUDIATE altogether the statement, that God made Solomon wise above all other men, for, as his conduct showed, he was ignorant of the commonest principles of good government. He opened a large trade, but by this his people were neither improved nor enriched. He retained that trade in his own hands, and heavily taxed the commodities he supplied, so that by means of his profits he was enabled to live in luxury. This was to exhibit selfishness as a man, and folly as a king; for as a king, desiring his people to grow, he would have tried to clear away all the stumbling-blocks on the path of commerce, looking to his own profit rather as the outcome of their success than as the result of their being impoverished. But it is pleaded on his behalf that he was unacquainted with those laws of commerce which are now recognised—that all monarchs of his time were equally ignorant upon the point—and that he only did what they did, and followed Oriental usages. This latter may be confidently denied, because, as we know, commerce really flourished in the early ages, and it did so because of being untrammelled by kingly despotism. But if it were true that he did only the same foolish things which were done by other Oriental monarchs, still, we ask, how then could he have had the wisdom from heaven that is spoken of? If he were no wiser than the rest, it is hard to see how he could have received the precious gift. Is it fair to boast about his superior wisdom, and then, in order to defend his reign from the charge of folly, to fall back upon the ignorance of others? But even in other matters the same fact is seen. We are told that "he trained the Hebrew people to love the beautiful, and initiated them into the secret of splendour." Did this make it calculated to make—Israel strong? When he made "silver to be as stones,

"and cedar-wood to be as the sycamores of the valley," when he collected ivory, and blue robes, and all kinds of costly things, and made them to be common in the new city of David, did he thereby strengthen the people and do something towards building them up into a noble nation? All history declares the contrary, for it shows that he who will befriend and wisely govern a people, will labour to train them into habits of industry and frugality, and will avoid all show and glitter, lest, peradventure, the people be led after the tawdry and vain, instead of pursuing the substantial and the practical. And this was Solomon's error, he was a sensualist in every sense of that term, and sought, with the greediness of the savage, after everything in the shape of glitter and colour that pleased the eye; nor did he ever fairly conceive the mission of a king to labour for the nation, to develop its resources, and to find his own happiness in the daily increasing prosperity of the subjects who bowed under his rule.

But I would not have it supposed that in thus speaking I deprecate the due culture of art as a moral and elevating power. It has been urged by Solomon's friends that his works were undertaken in the spirit of art, and, consequently, that we must treat him rather as a Pericles than as a Moorish king. But the apology is simply absurd. What of art is there in the wild craving for gold and colour? What of art was there either in the temple or the palace? Art, as a power to refine and elevate, is one of the greatest at the disposal of man. But to be used as a power operating in this direction, it must present itself in beautiful forms, in simple dignity, and in ever-glorious countenances. The man who paints a noble scene, preaches therein an ennobling sermon; and he who shapes from rude stone the almost breathing image of some god-like man, clothing the form with simplicity, the brow with intellect, and the countenance with majesty, thereby renders essential service to mankind by embodying the possibilities of humanity, and showing us in mute forms, which yet speak, how the ideal may be transformed into the real. True, as many urge, we need culture in order to comprehend the deepest mysteries of art, but the work of the artist preaches sermons to untutored souls long before they win the knowledge necessary to analyse the springs of this teaching. And, indeed, it not unfrequently happens that when that power is gained, the direct influence of the artist's work is lost, because we begin to dissect before we have paused long enough either to enjoy or be instructed. But, indeed, it is absurd to speak of Solomon as one who either conceived such ideas, or desired through art to elevate his subjects. His notions never went beyond the sensual indulgence of the moment, and the glory which has ever been so captivating to the Oriental mind. And, through pursuing this with too great eagerness, he was stricken down in the midst of sorrow and shame. He died as the fool dieth, and who was there that went to mourn at his tomb? The people said to his son, "Thy father made our yoke heavy, and forced us into grievous service;" so evidently they sorrowed not over his departure. Who, then, could mourn? He slept with his fathers, and left his child to reap the full measure of bitterness from the seeds of evil he had sown. David had given to Israel the possibility of national life, but Solomon had poisoned that life at the source. He had given luxuriousness, and had cherished sensuality, but neither in good laws, in good words, nor in good example, had he done anything whereby the nation could be exalted and made to live.

And here a word upon wisdom, and the true nature of this great blessing. The ancients spake of it as an endowment, as something bestowed upon man; and in this sense it was understood by the writers of both the "Kings" and "Chronicles." They were decidedly in error, and when we go to Tennyson's "Locksley Hall" the truth is made apparent in the one line:—

"Knowledge comes; but wisdom lingers,"

wherein the right distinction is made between the two, and both are fairly placed. Knowledge and Experience, combined with Thought, can alone give birth to Wisdom. Knowledge by itself is often a vexation of the spirit, and imparts neither peace nor power. There are men who know nearly all it is possible to know, and who yet are found to be of little value in life, either as workers or teachers. They are vast libraries, and cannot by themselves make their contents fruitful; they wander

hither and thither, carrying about the dead things of the past, but cannot inform them by thought, or render them vital as illuminators of the present. These men know all the noble mechanism of the universe, but not the soul that informs it all; and we can only liken them to the camel of the desert that perished through thirst, though carrying a skin of water upon its back. Then we have other men, called men of experience, who yet are not wise. Of the past they know but little, and care less. With them there is nothing like experience. The thing that was shall be again; "so it was yesterday, therefore let us provide for it to-morrow." Such men are ever at fault, for reading experience neither by the explanatory light of the yesterday, nor the strengthening hope of the morrow, they remain ever in one stay, neither growing in wisdom nor in peace progressing. But others there are who combine in themselves both experience and knowledge of the past, and yet are as very children, who cannot be entrusted with affairs, and who know not what should be done. They have within them no fire of thought. At school they were trained to believe a certain round of ideas, to approve a certain number of set forms, and to travel onward through life as though active reflection were a curse, rather than a blessing. Hence, though knowledge and experience both crowd their minds, they are helpless and poor in the midst of the sources of strength and wealth. For such we have no angry word, we have only tones of sorrow; they are what they are mainly through the folly of their age, which mistakes facts for wisdom, and the dry husk of knowledge for the informing soul.

There is another class more fortunate—the really wise. They are the men who have gleaned knowledge from various sources, have accumulated experience, and have made both pass into the fusing fire of thought, out of which wisdom will issue as the pure gold, leaving the alloy and dross behind. Wisdom thus cannot exist in any mind which has not been pre-occupied by knowledge and experience, for it is the child and not the father. Hence we say there are few wise; not because there are only a few who have knowledge, or only a few who have experience, but because only a few think well over and digest the knowledge and experience they have accumulated, in order to convert them into pabulum, whereby their souls may be made strong with true wisdom. Thus, wisdom is as the subtle spirit, the concentrated essence of both knowledge and experience, and few are they who have the blessing. But it may be ours. It is the child of our own action, and cannot be communicated. The road is open unto all, and for all, princes and the poorest of scholars, there is but one road. Travel that road, accumulate knowledge and experience, and all will go well when you pass them through the alembic of thought, but dream not that in other ways you can be made wise. Think not heaven will give wisdom, for heaven, in its mercy, never gives ready-formed that which it has already given us power to achieve. To give wisdom unto him who would not pass through the ordeal, would be to cast pearls before swine, and have them trodden under foot. For at first we know not the nature of what we ask, and should not comprehend it were it given into our possession. As we go on in pursuit, our eyes are opened, and we daily see more and more of the mystery, and become better fitted for its comprehension. As the mind nears real wisdom, it approximates to the Divine. We win victories over the material, and in due proportion rise to the supra-sensual. Solomon did not thus rise, and we say, therefore, he could not be wise. We say God cannot, and would not if He could, convert darkness into light, good into evil, or folly into wisdom; and to say that Solomon was possessed of God-given wisdom is but to say that He did this.



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FREETHOUGHT AND RELIGION.

ONE of the proverbs adopted by the Hebrews from the Persian, sets forth, almost in modern phrase, that, "A wise man will hear and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels." All who have meditated the facts of life will readily endorse this doctrine; for he who is in possession of real wisdom is a very modest man, and, knowing how small is the measure of his wealth compared with that which his researches have shown him to be obtainable, he is ever ready to harken unto those who profess to have discovered a truth which hitherto had been concealed. In an age of great mental activity such men stand upon the tiptoe of expectation, believing that, before long, great things are about to be revealed, and great is their joy when a new light breaks in by means of which subjects that were previously hidden in darkness are rendered comprehensible, for, as men who have found a treasure, they feel themselves to be richer and stronger than before.

Doubtless it may be said of them, that they are in an unquiet state, that they are ever examining the grounds of their belief, and are very ready to abandon opinions they had warmly espoused; but it remains to be proved that this should be preferred as a charge against them, instead of being viewed as a virtue of which they may be proud. The ignorant man is intensely disgusted with their perpetual prying into the nature of things, and considers that their speculations, casting, as they do, a shadow of doubt over what is believed, should be denounced by all good men. He who has no great store of knowledge is never troubled with grave doubts, and, as a natural consequence, treats all degrees of scepticism as evil; he treats it as an absurdity to seek after knowledge, for, as he pointedly inquires, Do we not already know all that can be known? As an additional reason against inquiry, he protests that all speculations inevitably lead to revolutions in society, and assaults upon religion. Such men readily avail themselves of every advantage, and profit by every discovery which inquiry has produced, and then repudiate the very means through which they have been benefited.

But, in justice to them, it should be acknowledged that they are the unfortunate victims of a bad education. The tutors who educated them were careful in laying it down as a demonstrated truth, that so far, at least, as

religion was concerned, all reasoning and speculation invariably produced the most pernicious results. They taught them that the religious virtue of a man consists not in the knowledge he obtains, but in the measure of faith he manifests; and, consequently, that what they had to do was to avoid, carefully to avoid, looking at both sides of the religious teaching they heard, and rigidly to adhere with all their mind, and soul, and strength unto what was taught them by their pastors in the church or chapel supported by their parents. It may be granted that the more intelligent and advanced thinkers in our Churches repudiate such narrow and mistaken views, and are ready to concede that every religious question should be left open for fair discussion; but, at the same time, we cannot be blind to the fact, that candid inquiry, and close critical examination, are as much repudiated by the majority of religious men as ever; nor do we find them to be a whit more willing to recognise the authority of the intellect in settling religious problems. If we were to canvass the congregations, there are excellent reasons for believing that as many as nineteen-twentieths would vote, that all religious matters lie beyond the sphere of ordinary reason; that the intellect has no command over, and no authority to deal with them; and that, instead of men demanding that dogmas should be proved, they must first accept them as unquestionably true, and then pray to God to reveal their meaning. Thus the right of the intellect is totally repudiated; the power of reason is set wholly aside, and men are asked to believe what they cannot either understand or harmonise with the remaining facts and phenomena of the universe.

The evils connected with this mode of treating the matter are manifold, and cannot be too deeply deplored. Apart altogether from the pernicious influence of such teaching upon those who are held to be religious, we discover that the so-called "irreligious," solely because of these misrepresentations, are induced to believe religion itself to be nothing short of a delusion. They hear the reason insulted and the intellect treated contemptuously, and knowing how undeserved is such treatment, they turn hastily away in disgust from the men who utter such absurdities. But it happens most unfortunately that, because these men have spoken as religious men, because they are popularly recognised as religious, the more liberal-minded conclude that he who is religious must entertain the same ideas, and speak in the same language of the reason—must repudiate intellectual freedom, and be the sworn enemy of everything that bears the mark of independent thought, and hence they conclude to have nothing at all to do with religious matters. There are thousands who have been thus led to speak contemptuously of everything pertaining to religion; not that in their hearts or lives they are opposed to that which properly pertains to religion, but simply because they have been falsely instructed in relation to its constituent parts, and hence they go about mocking against that which in their lives they realise—they are religious in their deeds, but are opposed to all religious teaching.

To all men who are thus disposed our advice is, that it will be well for them to remember that he who misrepresents reason may misrepresent religion also; that he who treats the intellect with injustice may be equally unjust in his treatment of religion. Why do they believe their ideas of religion any more than accept their ideas of reason? Why suppose that the clergy and mission-men know all about religion, when we know that they are so grossly ignorant in matters pertaining to the intellect? The fact is, that liberal men have confounded two things, which are radically distinct from each other—religion itself, and men's ideas about religion; and because of this,

thousands who are really and nobly religious, would think scorn to be thus denominated.

We may, without difficulty, discover many illustrations of our meaning, in the mode of dealing with art and science. For instance, Mr. Ruskin is a great teacher in the world of art, and has written various works intended to revolutionise our artistic ideas. But there are thousands who utterly repudiate his theories, and who are at daggers drawn with him about the first principles of beauty in painting, sculpture, and architecture. Will they be justified in repudiating art altogether because of the false ideas he has promulgated relating to some of its features? They act more wisely in remembering that art stands by itself, that beauty enjoys an independent existence, while his books are but the expression of his thoughts about the beautiful. So with the books of priests; they furnish us with the thoughts of men about religion, and if we discover that they are in error, we have still to inquire what is the truth pertaining to it. We hold that the religious sentiment is as permanent as humanity, and that no false theory can destroy the thing itself; and thus, while anxious to expose the errors into which men have fallen, we should be equally anxious not to ridicule religion itself because of their errors and weaknesses. The theories and teaching common among the Egyptians and Greeks about the planets were all wrong; but still the stars shone on in beauty and glory. They were waiting for their revelator, and as it was with them, it has been with all that we really know; so, also, will it be with religion.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XVI.

THE EARLY FRANCISCANS AND THEIR WORK.

THE thirteenth century must be regarded as one of the most important epochs in the history of modern civilization. The Crusades were rapidly destroying the old feudalism, and creating a commercial and municipal system in its place. Large numbers of cities and commercial communities were being called into existence, out of which were to spring vast social changes. Hitherto the part of the people in history had been merely to toil, to suffer in silence, and to die; but at the beginning of the thirteenth century the popular element began to make itself felt. There was growing up in men's minds a feeling that the people had rights, and that these rights should be recognised. In the cities this spirit of liberty first made its appearance, and there it rapidly grew and strengthened. It was but natural, therefore, that to them the oppressed serf should look for aid and shelter, and equally natural that the old feudal nobility should regard them with unappeasable hate. So, while on the one hand, we find the barons carrying on a perpetual petty warfare against all towns, waylaying the merchants and caravans, and sometimes even attacking the cities themselves; so, on the other, we see serfs, desirous to abandon their serfdom, those, too, who were oppressed and fled from tyranny, the outcast and the outlawed, all flying to the city as a place of refuge.

It was not, therefore, without reason that the cities of the Middle Ages were built as close and compact as possible, and had high walls surrounding them to serve as a defence; this, of course, led to the streets being exceedingly narrow, and to the free circulation of air being greatly impeded, thus causing those plagues and pestilences of which these cities so frequently

became the scenes. Add to these facts this also, that the appeal of those who sought a refuge within the walls was seldom refused by the citizens, who were guided in this no less by their love of liberty than by a desire to strengthen their hands by the addition of numbers. These refugees, however, having no place assigned them in the social life of the cities, became a kind of floating vagabond population, finding only a precarious existence, and having their home and lodging where they could find them. Community of misfortune led to this portion of the city populations congregating together; and thus it came about that those old cities had their St. Giles's even as modern London has. It was among this wretched portion of the population that the plague almost always made its appearance first, and committed the greatest havoc; nay, indeed, we may say that theirs was a chronic state of disease. The miserable state of this part of the municipal populations led to their becoming embroiled, and, until St. Francis established his Order, with a view of ministering to their wretchedness, none had looked upon them with any feeling but that of disgust; the Church had neglected them, and bodily, mentally, and morally, they had sunk almost below the brute creation.

Established in the midst of these districts, seeking to re-animate the souls of their wretched inhabitants, teaching them that they, too, were men, ministering, also, to their physical wretchedness, we cannot but view these early Franciscans with pleasure, and acknowledge that they were doing a great work in the world. They met a want of the age. It has been well remarked that Franciscanism was the Wesleyanism of the Middle Ages, it sought to rouse into a religious life those whom the Church could not, or would not, reach, and it met with a like success. Wesley and his coadjutors were looked upon by the stately parsons of the Establishment as, to say the least, extremely vulgar persons; their earnestness was decried as fanaticism, and we will not be bound to show that there was not much of the fanatic spirit in it; but inasmuch as it created a spiritual life for a class who could not be moved by the courtly formalities and grand ceremonial of the Church, it was doing a good and very necessary work. The class it sought to move was vulgar, so, if need were, it would be vulgar too. Even so was it with this Franciscanism, and no candid mind will hesitate to acknowledge in these early Franciscans an agency of good, in that they roused to a sense of religion, and, therefore, to active thought, the masses of European society. On this account, though working ostensibly in the interests of the Church, they were also, to some extent at least, working in the cause of reform and progress.

The love borne to the Franciscans by the lower classes of society is easily explained. Their doctrine was democratic, at a time when democracy was beginning to make itself felt as a social element. In an age when men were beginning to rebel against their poverty and wretchedness, St. Francis came to preach the holiness of poverty, to teach the down-trodden wretched serfs not only that they were men, but that they were actually better men than those who had lorded it over them so long. Nay, he did more, for he afforded them the means, by joining his Order, of escaping serfdom altogether. Mendicancy, which was beginning to be felt as a badge of disgrace, was enjoined as a religious duty, and the giving of the desired alms as a duty also. We shall not wonder, then, that thousands joined the ranks of the Mendicant Franciscans, nay, the wonder is that thousands more were not ready to join. "To the serf," says Dean Milman, "inured to scanty fare, and not unfrequent famine, the rude toil, and miserable lodging; and to the peasant, with his skin hard to

"callousness, and his weather-beaten frame; the fast, the maceration, even the flagellation of the friar, if really religious (and to the religious these self-inflicted miseries were not without their gratification), must have been no rigorous exchange; while the freedom to the serf, the power of wandering from the soil to which he was bound down, the being his own property, not that of another, must have been a strong temptation."* It is easy, therefore, to understand why Franciscanism became a popular institution with the lower orders both of the towns, from the actual benefits they derived from it, and of the peasantry, from the advantages it promised them. Their preaching in the vulgar tongue, the thoroughly human and practical character of the discourses they gave, the prominence given by them to the principle of love and brotherhood, and their ever ready exaltation of the Virgin Mary, were also among the things which recommended them to the age in which they appeared. In fact, St. Francis had struck a real chord of sympathy, and, by consequence, his followers soon swarmed through the various countries of Europe.

By way of illustration of the early progress of the Order, we may for a moment look at the establishment of the Franciscans in England. It was the year 1224 when four poor Franciscan brothers reached London, to establish a mission there. On Cornhill their first settlement was made, where they housed themselves "in miserable cells so open to the wind and weather" that they were fain to fill up the interstices of the building with masses of "dry grass." Within thirty years of that time, however, their monasteries in various localities numbered no less than 49, while the four poor brothers had multiplied to no less than 1200 and upwards. Their first convert seems to have been a person of some position, and the step he took (unprecedented in England) of leaving a wealthy home, and turning able-bodied beggar, was looked upon by his family as sheer madness. We are told, in the journal kept by the Friars, that on the new convert (whose name was brother Salomon) applying to his sister for an alms, she cursed him, but gave him a loaf of bread. He cared nothing for the curse, says the chronicler, but received the bread with joy. Brother Salomon, from the importance attached to him as the first English Franciscan, seems to have been the hero of numerous miracles, which, together with many others, are duly recorded in the veritable Franciscan Chronicles; but which, with saints', and monkish miracles, in general, demand a larger credence than is ours to give. Here, then, at their miserable tenements on Cornhill, then a malarious and fever-stricken portion of the city, these four poor brothers, now five, and soon to be six, carried on their work of love. Amongst the dirt and wretchedness, poverty and disease, of the city, they went day by day, with kindly words, with food, with physics, themselves tending, as kindly nurses, to those that could not help themselves. Let us not be blinded to the moral beauty of this, by being reminded that these men were "fanatics," "emissaries of the Pope," "sturdy beggars," or any other of the terms which "evangelical charity" is so ready to apply to anything at any time connected with Romanism. There was a moral greatness in those men, and a moral beauty in their lives, which, in spirit, it would be well if those who undertake 'to minister spiritual things' in these days would imitate. It is an illustration of the fact that Franciscanism embraced among its converts all classes, that, while their first convert was the scion of a wealthy house, their second was a serf, and, ere long, they numbered in their Order many of the nobility of that time.

As we have seen, the Friars of the early time sought not alone to afford

* Hist. Lat. Christianity, vi. 362.

spiritual relief to the spiritually destitute, but also ministered to the physical ills of the poor and wretched inhabitants of the towns. No doubt as their ministrations took a wider range they often exercised their skill as physicians, and prescribed for the ailments of the ignorant rustics, in those days when medical aid was difficult to obtain, and when obtained of very little use—though that is a thing which some people say of it now-a-days. There is no doubt, in fact, that in accordance with the spirit of their foundation, and the instructions of their founder, the Friars sought to gain a knowledge of the herbs and simples which were useful in cases of ordinary disease; and the best medical science of that day scarce went beyond this. We find that Shakspeare, in accordance with his usual custom of painting the distinctive characteristics of every character (even the most insignificant) that he touches, makes the friar in “Romeo and Juliet” to be acquainted with these things. In the speech of friar Lawrence we read:—

“O meikle is the powerful grace that lies
In herbs, plants, stones and their true qualities.
For nought so vile that on the earth doth live
But to the earth some special good doth give;
Nor aught so good, but strained from that fair use,
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse.”

Mr. Burton (the Editor of the Franciscan Records), calls attention to this, in support of his argument that the Franciscan Friars rendered great services to the physical sciences. This is a theory, however, which will not bear examination. It would be as near the truth to say that our grandmothers, who understood the virtues of herb-tea, and other “old women’s remedies,” were great physical philosophers. It is true he adduces Roger Bacon (who was a Franciscan Friar) in proof of his position; as well, however, might the Dominicans bring forward Savonarola (who belonged to their Order), to prove their love of religious freedom. Roger Bacon was as much an exception to the Franciscan Order in general, as Savonarola to the Dominican; and the proof of this is found in the ignorant charges of magic and sorcery brought against him by his brother monks, and the persecution he suffered at their hands. Roger Bacon, persecuted and imprisoned, was, in fact, the Franciscan verdict on natural science.

The Order of Francis within a few years of its establishment, became so popular that, on the one hand, it was found necessary to be somewhat chary of admitting all who were candidates for admission, and, on the other, to establish what was called the third Order of St. Francis, in which the vow of celibacy was dispensed with, and all who desired were allowed, by becoming members of this third Order, to connect themselves with, and further the objects of, the society. In this way large numbers of persons, nobles, citizens, even kings (as, for instance, St. Louis of France), joined the Order of Mendicants, being so, of course, only in name, but still bound by the tie of brotherhood with the begging and preaching Friars. It is easy to understand, therefore, that, inasmuch as wherever they might travel these Friars would find friends and hospitality, a large number of lazy idle vagabonds, whose only aim would be to live a jolly life doing nothing, and being well-fed at the expense of others, would soon be found among the Franciscan Friars. Indeed, so enticing was the prospect of such a life, that we find many other preaching and begging Orders growing up, until at last the Popes interfered to prevent the spread of an abuse which was likely to defeat the aim of the Papacy in permitting the establishment of the Mendicant Orders in the first instance.

JAS. L. GOODING.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 3.—SAKYA QUITTING HIS HOME AND FRIENDS.

THERE was yet another lesson for Sakya; to be learnt on his road to the pleasure-grounds. Again he went forth; and, behold! this time he meets with a pious man, with one who was known as an ascetic. Not one of the class who mortified his body—not one of those who daily inflicted pain and wounds upon himself, but one who had neither home nor business, wife nor child, hopes nor fears; one who was as barren of desire as of affection, and who, in quietude and singleness of heart, waited for all impurity to quit him, so that in extinction he should find heaven and blessedness. Such was the ascetic he saw, and then arose the grave doubt whether, of the two, himself or the ascetic were the happier man. This question of questions was not to be turned aside, neither could it be easily answered. True, he could command a ready body of slaves to attend him in his palaces and gardens; true, that horses of the best, and chariots the most costly, were ready when he gave the word; true, that the choicest food and richest robes were his; and yet what availed all these, if they brought no joy of heart, no real content of mind? He had his wife, children, parents, friends, but what were the affections that these called forth—were they anything more than transitory feelings, which were vulnerable at every point, and as susceptible of change as even the clouded sky? Were they anything more than links which hold men in bondage to Time and Earth, preventing the spirit from asserting its true freedom? Such, under the circumstances, were the questions asked by this earnest-thinking soul, and the answer which came to his mind was—start not, O reader!—in favour of asceticism and the attempt to secure annihilation of feeling. And from this came the conclusion that now he must tread the path of self-extinction, and this at all costs and hazards. Wife, child, home, friends, country—all unto him should be as if they were not, and as if he never had any real connection with them. Such was the present answer; and thus, for a time, had he solved his problem of life. If the reader have not travelled that road, it may be necessary to say: Bear with him, and marvel not at what may seem his folly, for he, too, had his battle to fight ere he could stand free from the shams, which, in that ancient time, had bound him. He who has fought the good fight will not fail to discover in this Sakya a brother in doubt and earnestness. To blot the image of a wife from the heart, to forget the joy that thrilled as the little one twined her arms about the neck, to cut off all old associations, was not an easy task, and could only have been coolly resolved upon by one of iron will and unbending energy. But these Sakya had, and hence all entreaties were vain to turn him from his purpose. Father, mother, wife, and child, all waxed eloquent in order to prevent his abandoning his palaces, family, and pleasures; but vain were their entreaties. He would go forth a beggar into the world, and when at length they said, "No! thou shalt not go from us, for by force we will hold you back," he smiled at them, and said it was in vain. Vain that horses were denied, and that a watch was set about him, for he escaped out into the big world free and alone; and having thus abandoned all wealth and love, power and pomp, he resolved to build himself up a new manhood, and so to become wholly detached from all sources of joy, sorrow, hope, and despair.

Alas! that such madness should ever seize upon mortal man or woman. We read the other day of a young lady who had taken the veil, amid much

not over-genuine applause. "The Rev. Dr. Manning preached the sermon," and, according to the reports, he very "eloquently" dwelt upon the advantages of shutting oneself up from the sin and sorrow, toil, anxiety, and difficulties of worldly life. Alas for the Dr. Mannings, that they should still speak when they have no longer anything but husks of life whereon to feed their hearers. Are these secluded beings good? Are they better far than the worldly ones? Why, then, if so, the greater and stronger the reason they should remain in the world, in order to offer it the benefit of a good example. If there be sin and suffering, surely they are evils which should be blotted out—yet how shall that be done, if all the good retire from the field to leave evil to triumph as it pleases? Grosser selfishness can hardly be conceived than is that of the man who, seeing his neighbour's house on fire, says: "Well, 'it is nothing to me, I have no call to trouble about it, so I will leave him 'and his house to be consumed, and shall just go away to the other end of 'the city where, far from the noise, I can sleep in peace.'" There is the nunnery, or the monastery, or the cave in the valley, into which human beings may retire, and be far from the world's noise. But, when there, they are not truthful; for they look at the visitor, saying, "Sir, we owe nothing to the 'world, and will not become its slave." How false is that saying, that they owe nothing to the world! Why how came that land upon which they live to be so firm, and rich, and fruitful? It was once a bog, a fen, a stagnant pool, or a wild wilderness. Did not men toil upon it, and, in the course of ages, improve it and tame it for the use of modern men? Will they, then, be so selfish as to take all, giving nothing in return? And how say they will not be the world's slave? Are they not, in flying from it, proving how much they stand in fear of it, and thus that it is their master? And can they hope to be happy, when all thoughts of love, hope, wife, husband, child, home, are extinguished? Believe it not; but believe rather that quite as many souls are wrecked in retirement as in active life. Roll back the gates, and look deep into the hearts of all the recluses—what agony and want are there! They may not be tempted, but are they filled with satisfaction? There are sorrows and doubts, pains and anxiety in the world, but not as belonging to it; not because of the world; but because we are human beings who see through a glass darkly. These are not to be got rid of by snapping the bonds of society. From ourselves we cannot fly. Behold! when the veil is on, and the gate is closed, having still our hearts, we still sorrow and care; for, while we exist, this, too—unless we are wise and live in the world, and conquer the enemies—is certain, that, being mortal, we must bear the consequences, and suffer. Our duty is to conquer; not fly, as cowards, away.

Sakya stealthily quitted home by night on horseback, and having reached the banks of the distant river, he dismounted. Here the change began to make itself manifest; he stripped himself of all his rich clothing and ornaments, and sent them back by the hand of a faithful servant, who had so far accompanied him, giving him a message to convey to his father, bidding him not grieve for his unfilial and hasty departure, for that "when he had 'found the Supreme Wisdom' he would return and console him.

Now, assuming a rude dress of a dark red colour, or, as some say, "changing garments with a poor hunter," he started upon his way to pursue for a time the mendicant life of the pious Brahmins. He carried his begging-pot, razor, sewing-needle, waist-band, and bathing-cloth; and, so supplied, he reached the city of Rajagriha, where he commenced his career, and begged for alms and food, with which he retired into the country, where he sat down

with his face to the East, hoping a blessing would follow. It is not difficult for intelligent readers to see that man as clearly as though he were now before their physical eye. No mere illusion that, but a real flesh-and-blood human brother, sitting there upon the long cusa grass, with mangoe trees spreading their broad branches over his head, the hot waters of the river moving slowly at his feet; behind him the city with its minarets and noisy show; while, before him, and just on the edge of the horizon, is the sun, cloudless and clear, now about to decline from his sight. And there he sits, his begging-pot, filled with rice and various fruits, stands by his side, and he is preparing for his first free meal. He is a brother mortal in search of happiness! He, to whom all the richest of food was always presented by bending slaves in bountiful profusion, shall now eat the broken meat of beggary, and shall herd with the wild and the poor! Why, oh ye Mighty Powers, has this man so fallen? Hush! child of earth with narrow ken, he has surely not fallen; for, in soul, in aim, he is nobler now than when, in princely splendour, he moved with authority amidst men. In the heart of that man, eating his broken meat, there is a total disregard of the world and the world's ways, a regard only for the pure and good. Princes might sneer, and lords might look with contempt, but that man can bear more than they can heap upon him, and bear it without even a tremor. True, he might have done better, could have found a clearer path; but he who does his best, who, in all earnestness of soul, flings behind the things of the world, and goes out bare to bless it, let no man dare to jeer, or to flout him. We know the better road, and when on that we know that we too have done our best, then, in truth, but not till then, can we venture with honesty to speak disparagingly of this new style of mendicants.

§ 4.—THE LIBERATION OF THE THINKER.

When Sakya had quitted home and took to living by means of beggary, he was one to be viewed as dead to the world. Surrendering himself into the keeping of certain Brahmins, he studied diligently, and through abstract meditation and contemplation of the Divinity, as mirrored in his own mind, he endeavoured after content of soul. Never did man more zealously pursue a given course than this one, but the hoped-for happiness, the much-desired content, arrived not. And he was not one of those who could pretend to feel what he felt not. He sat, according to the rules, to meditate, and could not help admitting that after all his efforts he was but acting a miserable part. The question then arose: How is it likely, through mere mechanical and ordained obedience, I can acquire that peace and blessedness which must flow freely out of the heart? Once this question were asked, he could not avoid seeing clearly he was wrong; and he had the courage to admit it. He turned to his Brahmin brothers, like Luther to the monks in Erfurt, saying: "I have done all ye bade me do, but yet I have not found peace. Peace I will have, and now I must turn elsewhere." That, too, was bravely done, and with the chance of prosperity, for the next glory to that of dying for the truth, is that of candidly admitting our error as soon as discovered; but which is rarely done, especially in religious matters.

To see he was wrong and to turn from it, were essential to this man's progress, and as a next step he entirely surrendered himself to Pradhan, or "fasting" and "self-torture." He lived upon scanty fare, slept hard, declined to bathe, and, in the course of six years, reduced himself to a fearful condition of physical exhaustion. The body he had viewed as a curse, as an evil burden; but if it were so, then, why not commit suicide? If so evil, then,

why not bravely quit it altogether? Ah, no, that were a crime; but by means of low diet, long fasting, watching, and flagellation, he will keep the body under, so that it shall not, through passion and appetite, plunge the soul into actions unbefitting its greatness. But here, again, and after six years of stern trial, the cure has not been found—peace has not been obtained. Then, too, does not the mind suffer through this suffering of the body? Ah, Sakya! is it so? and wilt thou ruin thy mind—and ruin it, too, through the very means thou hast adopted for its preservation? No, he at least will not be guilty of this folly—will not be so wicked. Behold how that famished skeleton of a man takes a little “milk soup,” and how he bathes himself in the Nairanjana river. Five men had joined with him in his austerities—had believed that by this means bliss would be secured, and they had not yet changed their minds. “See, he takes milk soup and bathes. Such a glutton and sensualist will never attain the Supreme Wisdom, let us, therefore, leave him.” They go their way, but he has become satisfied that their road leads not to peace, so let them go, and Sakya was now left alone to pursue a new course, and to be “tempted of the devil,” and otherwise tried in the fire.

P. W. P.

BELIGION AND THE WHOLE HUMAN NATURE.

THEODORE PARKER, in one of those beautiful “lessons of the day,” which he was frequently in the habit of composing and reading to his congregation, points out the fact, that there are many kinds of Christianity—the Christianity of Christ, the Christianity of the Churches, and the Christianity of the World. He might have carried his analysis further, and have shown that of the two last kinds of Christianity there are numerous sub-divisions. In fact, “Christianity” is a name given to religious beliefs differing by many degrees of difference the one from the other. What can differ more widely than Methodism and Calvinism, not to speak of Quakerism and Unitarianism? Even within the limits of purest orthodoxy are found all kinds of differences. In a Methodist Chapel we hear much of God’s free grace, and how all men may be saved if they will; while, a little distance off, a Calvinist preacher informs his congregation that “many are called but few are chosen,” that of the myriads of millions of men who have lived, and moved, and had their being, on this earth of ours, but the veriest remnant will be “saved.” Strange enough, to any unprejudiced mind, that men who preach doctrines so violently opposed, should claim, and even allow the one to the other, the title and character of Christians.

This fact is still more strikingly exemplified in the Church of England, in which the religion of the “Evangelicals” and that of the Puseyites are as widely opposed as Methodism and Calvinism, and yet both parties are not only looked upon as Christians, but are even identified as Churchmen. Looking, in short, at all the conflicting sects of orthodox Protestantism, at Quakers and Unitarians, at Roman Catholicism, with its various sects, at the Greek Church, at the Russo-Greek, with the Czar for a god, at Maronites in Syria, Nestorians in Persia, the Southern Americans, with their pro-slavery creed, and recollecting that all these are comprehended under the generic term “Christians,” we cannot but come to the conclusion that “Christianity,” at the present time, is, in fact, but a name for many religions. And then, when we look down the pages of the history of Christendom, and see there the multi-

form phases of belief which have, from time to time, claimed to be the religion of Christ, we cannot but have our minds still more vividly impressed with the same conviction. The fact cannot be denied; and it is to some extent explainable by reason of none of our religious systems dealing with human nature as a whole.

A rigid analysis would, we think, reduce the various forms of religion which exist in our churches and chapels under two heads: (1.) the Religion of Speculation, and (2.) the Religion of Feeling. Priestcraft has ever favoured the religion of speculation, and so we find that the characteristic of orthodox Christianity, under all its varying forms, is that it is a metaphysical and speculative religion. That is to say, it consists of a series of doctrines, has very little to do with duties; it feeds the hungry soul on theological chaff, and finds plenty of work for priests, as privileged expounders of polemical subtilties. We do not mean to assert that theological speculation has not its religious use; the evil is when theology is substituted for religion, and speculative beliefs are made to cover the entire religious field, when men are taught that faith in certain dogmas is necessary to salvation, and that "sound believing" will ensure their eternal welfare. Theology treated as any other science is treated, would be a worthy field for the exercise of man's intellect; but not having been so dealt with it has become a curse. When, however, theology shall be placed on the same footing as other sciences, then all will be well, and its religious use will be great.

The religion of feeling is a much higher form of man's religious development; it bases itself upon the emotions, and a mystic love is its central idea. It knows nought of theology, but is too easily made the tool of the theologian, by its willingness to accept his conclusions unconditionally and without inquiry. Let it be understood that we do not say that this side of religion is without its use. On the contrary, we believe the emotional nature to be the source of much religious truth; there are intuitions of the soul altogether above reason, to ignore which would be to cast away much of the highest and sublimest truth which man owns. The evil arises when faith is extended and exalted to the exclusion of reason altogether. It should ever be borne in mind that the domains of faith and reason are distinct, and unless this distinction is duly kept in view, the results are that truth is sacrificed, and one or other part of man's nature defrauded of its due. Properly used, both the reason and the feelings are useful in bringing God's revelation home to the soul of man.

Here, for example, is a man who dwells in the world of fact, he will believe nothing but what is capable of logical demonstration, and can be defined with mathematical accuracy; he is doubtful of the right of any man to allow his feelings to take any part in the search after truth; "What I can see, hear, smell, taste, and prove, that I will believe," such is the creed of this man. Shall we say such a man misses nought of God's truth? Nay, indeed, he misses much. In the first place, it may be remarked that these matter-of-fact people must, as human beings, be ever inconsistent; they cannot see, hear, smell, taste, or prove, love, gratitude, benevolence, and yet they believe in them. In the next place, be it observed, that in order to adopt the position these men take, it is necessary to suppose that one part of man's nature is not only useless, but also prejudicial to him, inasmuch as it interferes with his search after truth; because, however a man may strive to ignore them, his emotions will now and then assert themselves, and tend to (as such a man would say) vitiate his conclusions and impair the clearness of

his perceptions. Here is another who dwells in the world of faith and emotion, and believes without reference to the reasonableness of the thing believed; he ignores reason, and not only fails to accept many things as truth which are true, but believes as truth much which is actually false. This man is equally inconsistent with the other. They neither of them perceive that both the reason and the emotional nature, when duly balanced, have their use. Only he who perceives this can be just to himself, and he alone recognises the fact that God intended no one part of human nature to be ignored, but each and all harmoniously developed.

But beyond the two kinds of religion, already suggested as being patronised by the churches and chapels, is the religion of action. By this we mean the performance of moral duties, and which theologians have an especial antipathy to allow men to look upon as religion at all. The theology of the Churches is, in fact, diametrically opposed to morality; sound belief, that is an unquestioning acceptance of its various dogmas, is the sole condition of salvation prescribed by it; the practical result of this is, that men "stick to "sound believing," and fancy that therein they find an immunity for evil deeds and immoral actions. The difference between the religion of theology and the religion of action is radical; the latter must ever form part of true religion, because it consists of duties based on the laws of God, but the former consists mainly of man-devised falsehoods. The one carries its own authority with it—an authority derived from the moral sense in man; but the other needs all the authority derived from creeds, anathemas, denunciations, and all the other machinery of Priestcraft—an authority possible only by the degradation of man's nature, and by engendering fear and superstition in the mind. No one thinks it necessary that men should put the moral law into the form of a Creed, no one thinks of informing the world that he believes it wrong to commit murder or to steal; but in order to maintain their theology intact, priests find it needful to put it in the forms of Creeds and Articles, for unless men were drilled into repeating from their earliest years, "I believe this, that, and the other," they would never think of accepting as truth the falsities and absurdities of the popular theology.

And yet, in spite of all that is done to confine men within the bounds of a theological prison, to lead them to believe things destructive of morality, many men are better than their creeds; their daily actions practically ignore the teaching of the priest. The best proof, this, that man has a moral sense, which leads him to recognise what is right. This is the reason we find the religion of action sometimes within churches and chapels; the reason why the men who preach there—while they decry morality as infinitely inferior to faith, while they talk of good works being "filthy rags," and preach the doctrines of election and final perseverance, and others equally subversive of morality—are obliged to respect the moral law themselves, and to be careful to prevent the discrepancy between it and their teaching being too distinct and clearly perceived. Indeed, we are willing to believe that the moral sense in man is so powerful that these preachers themselves are frequently blind to the fact that their doctrines are productive of the evil consequences which follow from them.

True religion consists neither in speculation, feeling, nor action alone, but combines the three; thus accepting the conclusions of a rational theology, and the intuitional truths discerned by the soul of man, and demanding the performance of man's moral duties. A rational theology, we say—by which we mean a theology that shall accept truth from whatsoever source derived;

that shall teach religious truth scientifically, and gladly enlist the reason in the service of religion; that shall not pretend to have discovered all truth, but merely systematize that which has been discovered, and be ever ready to make any addition which may be shewn to be worthy, and to modify that previously accepted according as it shall be found to need modification; that shall, in short, adopt the same method with theology, as that which is adopted with the other sciences. Such a theology would assist, not hinder, as has hitherto been the case, the religious development of man. True religion, in combining such a theology with a belief in the revelation of Himself which God gives the soul, and with the due performance of all moral duty, would satisfy the claims of the entire human nature, and sanctify the whole man—body, soul, and spirit. Then the intellect, the spiritual nature, and the physical capacities would all find their religious use.

The end and aim of religion is, first to seek, and then to produce perfect submission to, and performance of, the Will of God, as ascertained in the laws which He has impressed upon His creation, and by which He intends man to be bound. In the search after religious truth the intellect finds its highest employment; for by its aid God's grand revelation of Himself in nature and in history is made plain, and the mysteries of the Universe are unlocked. The emotional part of man not only furnishes, through the conscience, the inner revelation of God's will, contained in all men; but it also seizes the cold perceptions of the intellect, breathes life into them, transmutes the abstract truth into the good deed, and thus ensures the performance of God's will, so far as it is perceived. Thus the proper use of the intellect and emotional nature is to bring the whole man to a knowledge of God and His laws, and to lead him to obey them. And so man, as body, soul, and spirit, may, in the words of Paul, be fitly called the temple of God, and the Spirit of God be said to dwell in him.

JAS. L. GOODING.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE "SONG OF SOLOMON."

THEY who have studied the evidences in favour of the authenticity of the Old Testament, and who have become in any true sense familiar with the literature of the subject, are well aware that, in their turns, all the books which compose what is called the Old Testament have been rejected by eminent scholars and critics. One rejects Genesis, another Ruth; one holds that The Kings is not inspired, and another that Job was borrowed from the Arabians, and so on through the whole series; so that when the modern freethinking inquirer desires to repudiate either of those treatises he can cite Christian authority for doing so. The only difficulty experienced lies in the fact, that he who has rejected one book endeavours to compensate for his heterodoxy by clinging with greater tenacity to those which remain; and this at the expense both of logic and consistency, for, as a rule, the arguments against the rejected book are equally telling against those which are received. Consistency, however, is hardly to be expected in this case; they who denounce are in the clutches of a party, and have been trained to bow in deference to established opinions; thus it is almost too much to expect them to deal reasonably and decisively with all the books. It is a great matter to induce them to go so far as to call the authenticity of any single book into question, for many of

those who hear of the doubts are sure to have their minds quickened, and a few of their number will ultimately be led to the truth.

Seeing that these books have been in turn repudiated, you will feel no surprise at hearing that the Song of Songs, called the Song of Solomon, has been repudiated by a large number of the most celebrated writers and teachers. But its fate has been a curious one, and the opposite terms employed in speaking of its contents are somewhat extraordinary. On one hand a respectable number of scholars and critics have maintained and declared themselves to have proved that the book was not written by inspiration; that it is not in any sense calculated to instruct and elevate the reader; but, on the contrary, that it is a beastly, immoral book, which should not be admitted into any respectable library, and should never be placed in the hands of the unsophisticated youth. There is a distinctness in these assertions which renders their meaning clear unto all, and hence the astonishment with which we listen to the opposite party, declaring that the Song of Solomon is one of the purest, most spiritual, prophetic, and beautiful of all the books which have come down to us from the ancient world. Evidently the variety of Hebrew opinions have found their counterpart in these contradictions of Christians, and under such circumstances we may reasonably expect to be instructed if we take a rapid survey of the actual teaching of learned men in relation to this treatise, or ode as it should be called.

It is quite clear that the Hebrews strictly forbade that the ode should be placed in the way of the young. They were not over modest, those Hebrews, as various passages in the Pentateuch and Isaiah fully prove; hence it must have been something very strong that induced them to act so definitely. The reason they assigned—without denying that there may be spiritual interpretations—was the danger to which the morals of the young would be exposed. Has not the English Church acted upon the same conviction? In that Church—a Church said to be based upon Scripture—it is remarkable, that in none of its services is this Song read or quoted. In their order, and without regard to decency—as witness, Tobit and the fish story—all the other books are read, but this is passed silently over. In theory the clergy maintain its sacredness; but by thus ignoring its existence, they practically reject it, and we can only account for the fact, by supposing that the men who drew up the instructions were not persuaded of its “Divine Origin.”

There are, however, various assertions in its favour, to be found both in ancient and modern books. The celebrated R. Akiba, one of the leading Rabbins of the first century—a man who was President of the Bai-Barc Academy, says: “The whole world was not worthy of the day in which this sublime song was given to Israel, for all the Scriptures are holy, but this sublime song is most holy.”* Higher praise could not have been bestowed, and, judging from various sermons which in modern days have seen the light, as well, also, from the critical commentaries written by Dissenters, we may conclude that they endorse nearly the whole of Akiba’s eulogy. So that, on the one hand, we have pious Jews and Christians both speaking and acting as though they believed the book to be immoral; while, on the other, another class of Jews and Christians, all equally pious, are “profoundly convinced that the book is one of the most precious gifts God has vouchsafed to mankind.”

What can reasonably be resolved upon in presence of these potent contradictions, other than to study the book with the closest attention, so that for ourselves we also may be enabled to form clear ideas of its nature and value? To afford my hearers some small measure of guidance towards achieving that end is the only object of this lecture. As it proceeds, we shall first endeavour to comprehend the general theories which have been formed and promulgated in order to explain it; shall try to discover what are the real facts connected with the literary and other peculiar characteristics of this poem; and may then very briefly test the question regarding its sacredness. And, in doing this, our object will simply be to bring out the actual facts, free from all the insane and ridiculous theories which from time to time have been woven around them. To my mind, the book presents itself as a kind of

* Talmud. In Yadaim, sec. iii, § 2.

poetical "Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded," and possesses a very high literary, but no religious, value. Not thus has it been viewed by pious Jews or Christians. Many of the Jews treated it as a spiritual song, a sort of allegory, and diligently enough, as witness their commentaries, they endeavoured to discover the hidden and more recondite meanings. They wrote their voluminous commentaries (which cannot now be read) in the same spirit that the Greeks wrote, when they assigned arms and feet to the stars. It was not a reasonable explanation of the whole, which they, without regard to labour, attempted to give; but simply to pile up a number of unconnected thoughts around each verse. For instance, take the following exposition of the sixteenth verse of the first chapter, as given in the Targum, or Chaldee paraphrase, written in the sixth century: "Behold! thou art comely, my beloved; yea, thou 'art lovely,' &c. The congregation of Israel answered before the Lord of the World, and thus said, How fair is the Shechinah of thy holiness, when thou dwellest amongst us, and receivest prayers with acceptance; and when thou dwellest in our beloved bed, and our children are multiplied in the world, and we increase and multiply like a tree that is planted by a stream of water, whose leaf is fair, and whose fruit is plenteous." Now what connection there is between this commentary and the text, it is hard, or even impossible, for any one to discover. There are words in rich abundance, and, as a rule, we like to believe a meaning really lies beneath all the words which have been used; but what it is, in this case, we cannot say, for it is a riddle beyond our solution. Surely the writer had some meaning, however irrational, and were it a passage found in some Egyptian writing, there would be no difficulty in saying it was plainly blasphemous; but as I do not believe the Hebrew writer to have had any such idea in his mind, I acquit, without understanding him. They who extol this style of writing must be unable to say why they do so, unless upon the modern assumption that a meaning lies in the sentences, which to ordinary readers is utterly obscure.

Of course, and in common fairness be it observed, I do not desire to convey the idea that all the Hebrew commentaries were equally absurd, or that they contain no valuable information; for that would be to commit a gross injustice, both to the ancient authors and to my audience. There is much of the very best alongside of the very useless. The passage quoted shows that the writer had never conceived within his own mind any very clear and intelligent idea of the aim of, or the central thought embodied in, this bridal song. As with many of the most distinguished Bible readers in modern times, he commenced with the fragmentary, and never passed a line beyond it. But to do justice to any composition, ancient or modern, but more especially the former, we must pass beyond its detail in order to arrive at a knowledge of the idea which the author sought to embody; and having thus obtained the mastery we can then go back to the detail, and fairly estimate its value. This, however, is seldom, nay, it may be said is never, done by the great body of modern Bible readers. They isolate, and take each passage, as possessing a worth of its own—as if it were entirely independent of all others; and hence, when we desire them to furnish us with some distinct ideas of the scope and aim of such books as Job or this Song, they seem to be wholly incapable of doing so. The writer just quoted belonged to this school, and unfortunately the majority of those who have undertaken to perform the work of commentators have been of the same order.

Other Hebrew writers rose higher by means of minute criticism, and through indulging in elaborate disquisition they laboured to prove the allegorical nature of the work; but, unfortunately, they could not agree about the reasonable and distinct idea the allegory was intended to convey. Some maintained that it was purely philosophical, being intended "to symbolise the union of the Receptive or Material Intellect with the Active Intellect." Others held that it was intended to "shadow forth the sufferings of the Jews during their wanderings." In the year 1350 the celebrated R. Isaac Schula, pressed by his friends to write a commentary upon it, turned to study what had been written, and found, as he says, that "some explained it literally, others referred it to the union of the body with the soul, others, again, expounded it according to the Medrash, and others, again, affirmed

"that it represents the union of the active with the passive intellect." Of course he rejected all these theories, and maintained that it represents the love of Israel for God. But amongst the Hebrew writers are many who have looked upon the book with the eye of common sense, and they teach the same as is taught by Rabbi Phillipson, of Magdeburg, that the design of the book is to show that true and virtuous love is invincible, and is not to be bought, but is a flame of God, here exemplified in the conduct of a humble shepherdess, who, being attached to a shepherd, was tempted by King Solomon to transfer her affections, but who overcame all allurements, and remained faithful to her lover.

After much bickering, and a great deal of vain writing, about the evil of admitting rationalism, this very reasonable explanation is now generally accepted by all who have read the poem with an eye to the facts, and who, as the necessary consequence, have wholly broken away from the old despotism; for, unfortunately, the Christians being under restraint as regards the presumed sacredness, as written "words of inspiration," of the whole of the Jewish Canon, were compelled to find some very plausible, if not satisfactory, justification of its entire contents. They accepted all as holy, and as holy they had to maintain it. This was very hard to accomplish, but if we only give full freedom to the human imagination there is no saying what can be achieved—we can paint great glories where only corruption reigns—and can convert the impure into the spiritual and most purely intellectual. The Christian Fathers were apt enough at this. They began with believing without reason; and then, without allowing it to operate, they launched boldly out upon the wide sea of "spiritual" interpretation. Origen, one of the most eminent, discovered that by "the bridegroom" we are to understand Christ, and that by "the bride" the Church of Christ is intended. Having discovered this, we can understand how it was that he said: "Blessed is he who sings holy songs, but more blessed is he who sings the Song of Songs." The great Athanasius discovered that "the book is full of dialogues between the Son of God and the human race; sometimes between men in general and Christ; sometimes between him and his ancient people." It is objectionable to do so, but I could amuse you all, more than you are likely to be amused by witnessing any modern comedy, by quoting some passages from his commentary; I abstain out of respect to the fact that to do justice to the man we ought to study and know his whole life, and through that we should see what he has written in quite another light. To him all the sentences he penned were full of deep religious ideas—he read them by the light of imagination—he studied them as the undoubted oracles of God; and, consequently, if our insight be wider and deeper, we must not mock at his trivialities or make too much of his weakness. The great Gregory, of Nyssa, also wrote a bulky comment upon the Song; and, as we learn from his notes, there was a powerful party that totally rejected the common orthodox interpretation. Gregory, however, entered very fully into it, and severely condemned the men who entertained such erroneous opinions. Still, however, the objectors were not silenced. Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia, wrote a commentary, in which he boldly rejected the allegorical interpretation; but his book is lost. Piety feared to preserve what the voice of the Church did not approve, and hence all books which were on the side of common sense were neglected, or feared, and so lost. A fact, this, we should keep in mind in judging the past; for there are abundant reasons for believing that the valid objections to modern theology, which are raised by the leading free-thinkers, were all started in the early ages; but the works have perished, simply because they who were interested in blotting them out never lost a chance of achieving their object.

(To be continued.)

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THE CHURCH BOOKS AND THE ESSAYS AND REVIEWS.

JUDGING from the ludicrously indignant tone of "the public press," as well as from the plethoric protests entered by official churchmen against that well-abused work the Essays and Reviews, it appears to have become a sort of popular opinion that the writers are a body of men who malignantly conspired together in order to do their utmost toward destroying the peace of the Church, and the national respect for truth; towards extinguishing all sense of religious claims and duties, and to the end that a blank denial of God and goodness should gain an ascendancy. The charges are very bitter and painful to repeat, but it is difficult to perceive how they could be otherwise than bitter when it was the clergy who preferred them. It has been both unwisely and impertinently set forth that the worst and most unscrupulous enemy it is possible for a man to have is a bad woman. This is a groundless theory, for the fact is, that, as an enemy, she is not half so relentless as a clergyman—than whom it is impossible to find any who are less merciful and forgiving. They who are taken before the bench hear it as a piece of good news that the parson is not sitting; for while he is absent there is some chance of mercy being extended toward them by the gentlemen of the county. When he sits they are certain that no mercy will be shown. And as it is the clergy who, for easily understood purposes of their own, are specially engaged in hunting down this volume, it is only natural to anticipate the use of language involving the severest censure, and that the English vocabulary of vituperative terms will be most diligently ransacked in order to obtain the bitterest which it is possible to employ.

Theological controversy is proverbially uncandid and ungenerous. In the entire range of theological writing there is no instance recorded of as many as six clergymen dealing candidly with each other in regard to points upon which they differed. The rule is, that a clergyman shall close his eyes to the defects of his own system, and apply a powerful magnifying glass when contemplating its better portions, but when estimating the case of his opponent he shuts his eyes to all the good points, and uses the magnifying glass in connection with the weaknesses. There is neither giving nor taking of quarter. The law of total extermination seems to reign in all its perfection in the theological sphere, and when, as in this case, the entire Church has been

aroused from its long slumber, roused from its somnolent enjoyment to defend its time-honoured source of ease and plenty, it is but according to the common course that there should be a free use of the imputative and scurrilous. It has been so, and we could expect no less.

One of the arguments now employed against the writers—an argument dressed up in language which we cannot copy into our pages—is in relation to their continuance in the Church. The reverend calumniators are anxious to destroy the reputations of the men whose arguments they cannot reply to. They endeavour to induce their readers to believe that none other than selfish or roguish men could have written as the Essayists have done, while eating the bread of the Church. And gathering impudence as they write, they are charitable enough to advise that “to save what of reputation remains to them, they shall quit the sanctuary which has been dishonoured by their “intrusion and unfaithfulness.” Oily sermonisers are always delicately moral when marking out the course of conduct to be followed by other men, and we doubt not that many who offer this advice are of the Joseph Surface school, who would make all the world moral in order to claim the virtue of the work as a set off against their own delinquencies. They do their morality at the expense of other people. They would have the Essayists surrender their preferences, and then, when standing without the pale of the sacred congregation, “if it pleases them they can join with their friends the infidels,” and be absolved from all mere worldly blame. The Reverend Barnacle Zionbluster is perfectly assured in his own somnolent mind that no other course could be pursued by honourable men; and shall we doubt that Barnacle would act thus if he had written such a volume? It is, however, perfectly certain that no such treatise will ever appear under that signature, and thus Barnacle is safe in suggesting what would be his course as an upright man.

There is no doubt of this being, to the thoughtless at least, a very telling argument. In England, the majority of persons find themselves to be incapable of tolerating that their contemporaries shall pass uncondemned when possessed of that miserable spirit which enables men to defame those whose servants they are—to defame those whose livery they wear, and whose bread they eat. The unuttered, but general sentiment, is in favour of abandoning the service of those whom we cannot avoid abusing—love them and be honest unto them, or be candid enough to leave their flesh pots. We grant the general soundness and nobleness of the principle, while at the same time recognising that these authors are not guilty, in the ordinary sense, of violating it—at least as only violating it in precisely the same measure that it is violated by nine out of every ten clergymen. We can honour the man as earnest and noble who boldly gives up his living, saying, I cannot believe the dominant theology, and, therefore, henceforth I shall cease to minister at the altar; but we cannot say that they are necessarily dishonest who continue to officiate. Our question is, Are they earnest in promulgating the new truths which have enlightened their minds? In what way are they who go to church to be taught the truth, if every clergyman quits the fold directly he has discovered it? It may be suggested, as a question fairly open for discussion, whether a clergyman like the Rev. John Macnaught, of Liverpool, would not be guilty of a dereliction of duty were he to quit his church. The ground is dangerous to tread, but nevertheless it must be debated, for the time is not far distant when he, with the Essayists, will find many fellow-preachers to share and inculcate the denounced opinions.

It is certain, as a rule, the Church has not been very particular upon this

point, for the majority of English clergymen are eating the bread which was designed for other men. The greater part of the wealth held by the Universities and the Church, was obtained in the form of Roman Catholic endowments. Religious men dying, left money and lands to be applied for educational purposes, or for the annual repetition of a given number of Masses. The Roman Catholic system has been blotted out, and this wealth is otherwise applied; but no clergyman within our knowledge has ever felt any qualms of conscience, as to the impropriety of "eating the Roman Catholic bread," and there is no reason why the Essayists should be a whit more particular. The Protestant defends the present use of the old endowments upon the theory that the Anglican Church teaches more of truth than was taught by those who were masters of the position when these monies were bequeathed; he justly argues that it would be absurd either to cling to old and false doctrines because there is money to pay the preachers, or to refuse to pay the teachers of a nobler truth with that money; and his argument is equally available for the Essayists as for the orthodox Anglican Churchmen. In each case the men settle the point with their own consciences by assuming that, in the highest sense, they conform to the will of the original donor in teaching that religious truth which is of importance to mankind. And if these Essayists, as we doubt not they are doing, teach conscientiously, we know of no reason why they should not use the money which was left by Roman Catholics, as they may, who, according to the Catholic theory, "are more unfaithful than the freethinkers."

But although reasonably able to defend the Essayists upon this score, we are far from believing they can be honestly defended from all the charges which their assailants have preferred against them. We are by no means certain they are not actually guilty of conspiring against what is technically called the peace of the Church, and which, as we understand it, means the convenience and comfort of Church dignitaries, with the maintenance of the easy-going preaching style of rectors, deans, and bishops. The hierarchy must actually work a little in return for pay received. The Essays have impaired the digestive powers of half the Bench of bishops, and as to the deans, there is no knowing how much mischief they have suffered, threatening a complete suspension of their much-loved usual indulgence in wine and nuts. But unhappily human history affords no parallel to this case of disturbance. In our boyhood we remember a jocular sailor resolving to destroy the peace of a number of crows which had taken up their abode in the tall trees which grew in a cathedral yard; to effect his fell purpose, he, with great skill, rigged out a soldier, supplying him with the accoutrements, musket and all, with an excellent mask; when complete, he fastened the figure up to a branch, so that while standing it would be swayed slightly backward and forward. It was a formidable looking affair, and utterly regardless of dicta uttered by Broderip and Swainson, we are perfectly sure the birds were deceived and rendered most unhappy; they believed that their deluge had come at last. From every nest they could see the soldier, and the noise made by them when discussing his quality, while estimating his intentions, and the probable length of his visit, was most intolerable. There was not one bird in the rookery that slept without dreaming of that devilish soldier. Some of them got up and went out to spend their time, screaming over the distant fields, as if the day of judgment had come, and they had lost their ticket. Day succeeded day, and there was no peace for them, no cessation of the horrible din and disorder, until the dean, having discovered the cause of the commotion,

ordered that the figure should be destroyed, when, as a natural result, the old rooks, though greatly disturbed about the past, were enabled to sleep in peace.

In much the same way, although by no mere stuffed figure, has the peace of the Church Rooks been disturbed by these Essays. The authors have rendered it impossible for the hierarchy to sleep in peace, for they threaten its existence. The bishops can see the destructive gun, they can scent the inevitable consequences, and hence the episcopal cawing. Formerly a bishop had a very easy time of it, but now there is a skeleton laid upon his table, that speaks audibly enough of the end drawing near. And is it not time? England has paid scores of millions for its bishops, and hundreds of millions for its churches; but no man can show a corresponding return of good achieved or of virtue developed. Hitherto both of them have been like the druggists' window bottles, more for show than use. The poor have paid freely out of the proceeds of their toil, yet have not been benefited. The rich have had a spiritual aristocracy to flutter through their saloons, but, we fear, without ever finding their hearts softened or their motives elevated. The only persons who have derived benefit are the washerwomen, unto whom the getting up of so much lawn has been a matter of high importance, and we trust, as a rule, of considerable profit. But remembering the amount of disturbance caused in the episcopal mind, we shall confess that it is but natural to expect a show of irritation. No man likes to be disturbed while enjoying the after-dinner nap; and in like manner the hierarchy have resented the action of the Essayists, which has destroyed the peace of the bishops' minds, and rendered it necessary for them to make, at least, a show of doing something for the bread they eat.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XVII.

THE MENDICANT MONKS.

IN speaking of the Mendicant Orders of Monks it must not be forgotten that the Dominicans as well as the Franciscans were mendicants and preachers; though the objects proposed in their establishment and their after-developments were entirely different. It is true that both Orders had at first a common object—to preach. The Dominicans, however, made it their peculiar business to preach against heresy, they were from the first, and ever continued to be, the auxiliaries of the Papacy; whereas the Franciscans, who remained true to the rule of St. Francis, became the opponents of the Pope, and the founders of more than one heretical sect. "The office of the Dominicans," says Michelet, "was to regulate and repress. Theirs was the Inquisition; and to them was confided the teaching of philosophy, even within the pontifical palace. Whilst the Franciscans hurried over the world in the wildness of inspiration, alternately sinking and rising from obedience to liberty, and from heresy to orthodoxy, firing the world, and agitating it with the transports of mystical love, the sombre genius of St. Dominic buried itself within the sacred palace of the Lateran, and the granitic vaults of the Escurial."

These two Orders afford an excellent example of the policy by which the Papacy sought to retain its influence in Europe. The Dominicans undertook the work of keeping down heresies; while to the Franciscans was allotted the

task of bringing into the Church, so far as could be, the progressive and freethinking elements; their work was, if possible, to reconcile to the Church those from among whom opposition and heresy would otherwise be likely to spring.

Spread by thousands throughout every country of Europe, these Mendicants might be met with on every road, in every town, and in every village, soliciting alms or preaching to the multitudes, ever ready to listen to these men, glib of tongue, speaking a language they could comprehend, and after the manner of the Spurgeons of modern days, interlarding their discourse with jests, imaginary conversations, and illustrations calculated to take the ears of the ignorant populace. In this way they became useful to the Papacy in preaching up the goodness of the Pope, and the duty of obedience to him, and also in collecting the moneys which, either in the shape of Peter's pence or otherwise, went to swell the revenues of the Papal treasury. We shall meet with them in a later age as the vendors of Papal Indulgences; and through all the ages in which they continued active they were the great manufacturers and purveyors of Saint's miracles, and it was doubtless the more imaginative or mendacious of their respective followers who have adorned the lives of Dominic and Francis with the extraordinary legends which good Catholics now receive as veritable history.

It has been remarked with great truth, that these miracles, of which the monkish writers in the Middle Ages were such profuse retailers, should not always be taken as gratuitous falsehoods; that there may frequently have been a ground-work of truth on which they were based. It is easy to conceive how an ignorant and superstitious generation would change natural incidents into stupendous miracles, without being in anyway desirous of deceiving. The intense realism of the Middle Ages, too, was ever seeking to externalise the subjective; and no doubt frequently the writers merely intended to convey, in the form of allegory, some truth regarding the person spoken of, which succeeding ages accepted in all its reality, and called a miracle. There is no doubt the Church fostered the spirit of miracle-mongering; but we think fairness demands that we shall allow a rational explanation to be possible of much that was stated and believed, without in all cases deeming it necessary to resort to the theory of intentional falsehood.

It may be interesting to some of our readers for us to state here that the mendicant monks were variously known in England by the names of Minorites, Grey Friars, Cordeliers, Black Friars, and White Friars. The tradition and evidence of their existence in large numbers is found in most of our cities and towns. In London, for example, we find the Minorities, and the districts of Blackfriars and Whitefriars, all named from the existence of Franciscan or Dominican monasteries on those spots. Close to the Minorities, too, may be found Crutched Friars and Austin Friars, the latter being the site of the house of the Augustinian Hermits, an Order of a later date, but memorable in the history of the Reformation from Luther being one of them. They, with the Crutched Friars, were, in fact, offshoots of the Franciscan Order. The name of Minorites, or Friars Minor or Lesser, was the proper designation of the Franciscans, being the name given to his Order by Francis as a mark of humility. Cordeliers was a name derived from the cord worn round their waist; Grey Friars, from the colour of their robe. The Black and White Friars were Dominicans; the first name was that they were usually known by, black being the colour of their ordinary garb, and the other was given to them on account of a white habit afterwards adopted by them, and

worn on special occasions, the original of which they pretend was the gift of the Virgin Mary to one of the brethren.

The spirit of Franciscanism underwent a change as success and popularity made the Order wealthy. With wealth, the possession of which itself was a departure from the rule of the Founder, luxury and vice crept in among them, and degradation from the early idea came as a natural consequence. It is somewhat astonishing how quickly this result arose. Matthew Paris says: "It is a matter of melancholy presage, that, within the four-and-twenty years of their establishment in England, these friars have piled up their mansions to a royal altitude. Impudently transgressing the bounds of poverty, the very basis of their profession, they fulfil, to the letter, the ancient prophecies of Hildegard, and exhibit inestimable treasures within their spacious edifices and lofty walls. They beset the dying bed of the noble and the wealthy, in order to extort secret bequests from the fears of guilt or superstition. No one now has any hope of salvation but through the ministry of the *Preachers*,* or the *Minorites*." So greatly did this abuse extend that we have the authority of Hallam for saying that the Statute of Mortmain, passed shortly after this, was occasioned by the rapacity of the Mendicants. "They are found," continues the chronicler, "at the Court, in the characters of counsellors, and chamberlains, and treasurers, and negociators of marriage. As the agents of Papal extortion" (this was the secret of the hatred afterwards displayed by the English towards them), "they are incessantly applying the arts of flattery, the stings of rebuke, or the terrors of confession." He further complains that "with overbearing insolence, they frequently inquired of the devout by whom they had been confessed. And if the answer was, by my own priest, they replied, and who is that *ignoramus*? He never heard lectures on theology, he never gave his nights to the study of decrees, he never learnt to unravel knotty questions. They are all blind, and leaders of the blind. Come to us, who know how to distinguish leper from leper." The charge against them was that in this way they caused a great degeneration of morals; by receiving confession and granting absolution in cases in which the parish priests would have refused it; also that people were the more ready to commit sin which they would have been ashamed to confess their own priest, but which they hesitated not to confess to the itinerant friar, whom they were not likely to see again. We dare say there is truth in this, though it should not be forgotten that the persons making the charge were the priests who were aggrieved by the invasion of their province and privileges by the friars. Be this as it may, however, the growing wealth, rapacity, and depravity of very many among the Mendicants is a fact too well established, and too much in the natural order of things, to be doubted, even if the history of the Orders were not itself proof of the fact. Learning, too, which was repudiated by St. Francis, is now found in their ranks; and it is a somewhat remarkable fact, that all the great intellects of the thirteenth, and the early part of the fourteenth centuries, are found in the ranks of one or the other of the Mendicant Orders. This fact led to the influence of the Papacy being by their means carried into the Universities.

A feud, ere long, arose within the Franciscan body, between those who desired to stand by the rule of the Founder and continue to abide in "holy poverty," and those who were for enriching the Order, and departing at least from the letter of St. Francis's rule. The learned Franciscans, by their learning, were departing no less from the rule, than the lower and sensual

* A name by which the Dominicans were known.

among them were by their luxurious lives and hunt after money. Opposed to both these (as living in abrogation of the rule of life they had sworn to adopt), were the stern fanatical class of minds, who desired to see the rule observed in all its strict severity; who insisted upon the renunciation of all worldly property, and contended that no man was truly a disciple of the blessed St. Francis until he was absolutely destitute, and unless he refused to accept money on any pretence whatever, and possessed only the "two tunics, one with a hood and one without, the girdle and the breeches" allowed by the rule; unless, too, he despised and eschewed all human learning, and carefully avoided all ostentation of eloquence, sedulously seeking to hide aught that might raise him, in any way, in the estimation of his fellows. It was out of this opposition arose the fatal schism in the Franciscan ranks, which altogether changed the character of the Order, and turned the true Franciscans from obedient sons of the Church, and ardent adherents of the Pope, into wild heretics, and the greatest enemies of the Papacy; stirring up, too, once more into active life, the Inquisition and the flames of persecution.

When the dispute first arose the Popes were appealed to; Gregory IX. relaxed the stern code of Francis, but the Spirituals (as the sterner Franciscans called themselves) refused to admit his authority. After that Innocent IV. sought to settle the matter by a clever equivocation; he decreed that all the houses, domains, church furniture, and property amassed by the Order, should be held to belong to the Pope, and he would grant the usufruct thereof to the Brethren, who would thus enjoy their wealth and obey their Founder too. The intractable Spirituals, however, would not allow the Pope to seduce them to palter with their consciences in this way, and the feud continued. For a time, however, it led to no open breach, and the dispute was kept within the Order, the Spirituals contenting themselves with denouncing the sin of their brethren, both in words and action. The more zealous amongst them retired from the luxurious convents and palatial residences in which the Order had now lodged itself, to take up their residence in huts and caves, many of them seeking the loftiest peaks of the Apeunines, in order there, by their solitude and poverty, the more forcibly to protest against the wickedness of their degenerate brethren.

JAS. L. GOODING.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 5.—FINAL EMANCIPATION OF SAKYA.

WHEN Sakya had been relieved from the oppression of starvation theories, and though ceasing to believe that peace within was obtainable only upon condition of his pursuing a formal course in relation to his dietary, he was brought more into accordance with nature, and ate, and drank, and slept, and bathed the same as other men. From this time he lived freely, entered into sports, and, in fact, became as other men. From that hour he looked with more intentness into the actual—the mighty system of the Universe, and although he never learnt the order of nature as it is known in modern Europe, he rose to the perception of many truths of surpassing importance and value. He desired earnestly enough to be instructed in relation to them, but there were none to teach, and within his sphere there were no means through which he could pass into the possession of the knowledge which was his aim.

But although this beneficial change was wrought, it was not without

much pain and suffering. It was then that he was tempted by Mara (or as Europeans name him, "Satan,") the "Lord of Pleasure;" the triumphant "Lord of Death;" the powerful "Worker of Iniquity;" the "Source of monster Sins." Mara, who was all this and more, became alarmed, lest, as he conceived, Sakya should succeed in achieving the purpose of his heart; for, "in that case the evil kingdom would be sorely shaken, and sin would be checked in its progress." Feeling this, Mara (Satan) resolved to tempt Sakya to his ruin, and to that end, appearing before him, he laid out immense treasures, and declared that for one act of worship he would give them all to Sakya. "All that thou seest," said Mara, "will I give thee if thou wilt be obedient unto my commands, and will grant my requests." It appears, however, that Mara had tempted him before. The Hon. George Turnour furnishes us with the following translation from the Pali Buddhist Books. Sakya, when overcome with emotion, rising from his princely bed at the time when he had resolved upon a new course of life, and was about making his escape from his palace in order to pursue the search for true happiness, was thus tempted: "Mara, or the Prince of Serpents and Devils, the agent of sin, said, Let me stop this great mortal, and rising aloft into the air, thus addressed him: Sakya, depart not, on the seventh day from hence, the heavenly Chakkatanan will most certainly come to pass. Then thou shalt exercise sovereignty over the four great quarters of the earth, together with their two thousand islands: blessed (one) wait. Sakya then asked, Who art thou? I am Wassawatto. Then said Sakya, I am aware that both empire and universal dominion are proffered to me, I am not, however, destined for royalty. Depart, Mara, approach not this subject or place."* So that he was not to be won over by any offer of wealth or dominion, and could not submit himself to the direction of one who had deliberately taken up arms against the Highest. The Buddhists are very proud of this triumph, which they conceive could not have been gained by any mere man. Evidently it was difficult for them to conceive of a human being resisting the temptation to become rich, which, as we know, was a weakness upon their part which we have no difficulty in repudiating, even although we look upon Sakya merely as a man. They, however, who view him as a God, are not seemingly aware of the absurdity lurking in the supposition that a God, as they say Sakya was, could have experienced any difficulty in the matter. But when such subjects are advanced, there is no thought exercised by any who are believers. They accept the common notions as lying beyond the pale of inquiry, and within the realm of faith. There is, upon the part of the Buddhist, no doubt regarding the truth of the narrative, any more than the Christian doubts the truth of the narratives relating to the temptation of Jesus. Neither is it of much avail to raise a debate upon the absurdities involved in them, simply because they who can look with their own eyes, and with human interest into this Universe, and still believe in the action of Mara or Satan, are still wearing their long clothes, and are little fitted for comprehending the deeper mysteries of being.

After the temptation of wealth had failed, Mara resolved upon trying the power of beauty, to which end he brought "troops of the most ravishing maidens," all ready to woo and win the pious hero over to the paths of incontinence and sin; but Sakya, like St. Anthony, is reported to have banished them all, so that he passed with perfect safety through the trying

* *Prinsep's Bengal Asiatic Journal*, vol. vii. p. 807. For an account of the great fight between Sakya and Mara, see ditto, p. 812.

ordeal. Beauty had no all-potent charm for his eye, and he was as freezing ice to all their winning endeavours, and the result was the same in all the other trials. The Thibetian and Ceylonese, the Japanese and Chinese, as well as the Nepaulese books, are well stored with long narrations of how at this stage Satan (Mara) vexed this thinker; but all relate in a tone of triumph the story of his glorious victories and final overthrow of his enemy. He spent seven weeks in complete solitude, seven successive weeks far removed from the haunts of men, beneath the trees of the forests, devoted to "heaven-moving prayer," to earnest thought, and to that kind of serious self-examination which exalts and spiritualises the human mind into affinity with God; and during this long fast the devil tempted him in the most subtle ways, o'er and o'er again, but all in vain, for he had achieved his victory, he had emancipated himself from the dominion of all mere sensual enjoyments, and was now in truth a Buddha, he had entered into Buddhahood and bliss.

The Buddhists of our age, and indeed through many centuries, have contended for a physical devil, a substantial Mara, but if we take the words of Sakya himself, as reported in the Sacred Books of the Thibetians, we are better fitted for giving our assent, seeing that with him there is no bodily presence. "I must soon triumph over the Satan. Thy first troop which thou usest to assail men is composed of wishes and desire, the second is displeasure, the third is hunger and thirst, in the fourth stands passion and lust, in the fifth dulness and sleep, in the sixth fear and dread, the seventh is thy scruple or doubt, the eighth is anger and hypocrisy. Those that seek only for profit or gain, for praise such as is bestowed in verse, for honour or ill-gained renown, men praising themselves and blaming others. Those are the troops that belong to the black Mara,"* (Spirit of evil). So that if these words are a fair report of his speech, Sakya had conceived the idea that temptations of the Devil are rather to be conceived and spoken of as internal; as affecting solely the inner man, than proceeding from outward causes, or, as the Germans say, the temptations and appearances were subjective and not objective. They had an internal but no external reality.

But in whatever sense these stories are to be understood, we are now to recognise that Sakya had emancipated himself; he was now free; he had gained the great victory, and was no longer the slave of doubt, of anger, or of pain, and it was because of that deliverance the hosts of heaven praised him. His followers, as in the instance of Jesus of Nazareth, now heard voices from heaven, "holy voices," calling him blessed, and it was in a distinct style they spake or sang—using the following language:—"There has arisen the Illuminator of the world—the world's Protector—the Maker of Light who gives eyes to the world, that has grown blind, to cast away the burdens of sin. Thou hast been victorious in the battle. Thy intention is accomplished by thy moral excellence. All thy virtues are perfect. Thou shalt now satisfy men with good things. Gautama Sakya is without sin. He is out of the mire, he stands on dry ground. He will save other animal beings that are carried off by the mighty stream. Great genius thou art eminent; in all the three worlds there is none like thee. To this world, sleeping for a long time immersed in thick darkness, cause thou the light of understanding to arise. The living world has long been suffering the diseases of corruption. The Prince of physicians is come to cure them of all diseases. Protector of the world, through thy appearance all the mansions of distress shall be made empty,

* Cosma Korosi. The Thibetian books. Bengal Asiat. Trans. xx.

"Henceforth both Gods and men shall enjoy true happiness. None of those who came to see thee, the chief and best of men, shall for a thousand ages go to hell, or see the place of damnation. They who hearing thy instruction grow wise and sound, shall not be afraid at the destruction of the body. Having cut off the bonds of distress, and being entirely freed from all farther incumbrance, shall find the fruit of the highest virtue (enjoy the greatest happiness.) These are the persons on whom alms may be bestowed, and who may receive them. Great shall be the reward of such alms, for they shall contribute to the offerers' final deliverance from pain."* Thus ends the address delivered by the Angelic Ones—by the Holy Voices—in the hearing of all who had become followers—from out the highest heaven, and we cannot avoid being struck by the resemblance between this and what is related in the Gospels as occurring in the case of Jesus. Modern Missionaries have asked if the Buddhists have not copied from the Christian books, and many of them, to make the matter easy, have rushed to the conclusion that the remarkable similarities are not to be accounted for in any other way. If they succeed in proving this, the history of Christianity will become the history of Buddhism, for there is no room for doubting about which was first preached unto men. We do not say that the later form is copied from the earlier, but we do say that many of the things originally believed of Buddha alone, are now believed of Jesus. In the Alexandrian School the legends were blended, and many men have been induced to believe certain things of Jesus which were wholly unknown to the converts who founded the early Church.

P. W. P.

OUR EXPENDITURE AND THE POPULAR FALLACIES.

It was said by men of ancient nations that "there is a time for all things," and that "every dog has his day." Judging from the tone of the Press, it appears the hour is not far distant when this English nation will survey the recent career of the Commons, and demand to know where the money goes. The discovery has been made that our National Expenditure is enormously out of proportion to our means, to our wants, and to the value received in return for what we expend. Our annual outgoings exceed our means, not only in the sense of outstripping our income, but in this also, that the enormous expenditure presses unduly and iniquitously upon the labouring classes, who are the creators of our national wealth, and the sources of our prosperity.

The public writers seem, at length, to have made the discovery that it is utterly impossible to continue spending as we have done without ensuring want in the cottage, and the neglect of education—two evils which will create in the breasts of the toiling millions a spirit of bitterness and hatred that the lapse of ages cannot obliterate. Abstractedly considered, the average rate of wages may be good, but not so when considered in relation to the weight of taxation and the price of provisions. The weekly earnings of nineteen out of every twenty who labour, are absorbed in procuring what is needed to supply the table, leaving them nothing wherewith to procure what is required to meet educational and intellectual needs. If we continue this course the law of retrogression will assert its supremacy. Deny the means of intellectual culture, now that we have advanced so far, and but one

* Cosma Korosf. Bengal Researches.

result can follow. They who are thus restricted must fall back into the condition of savages, and, in many senses, their state will be more deplorable. They will be compelled to toil and suffer more. The pain of that hungry man is greater who sees food but cannot obtain it, than is that endured by him who not even sees the provisions of which he stands in need. He who walks about, seeing on every hand the proud results of scientific and intellectual progress, and desires to obtain knowledge and culture, but is debarred through poverty from gratifying his healthy wishes, is in a far more deplorable condition than the Bosjesman, who neither knows nor cares for intellectual and scientific progress. If we do not pause in our career it is evident that darkness will come again, and we shall be debased and ruined through our prodigality.

But in what way are we to reduce our outgoings? On one hand it is advised that a searching inquiry shall be instituted, so that they who eat so largely of the national bread, without rendering any equivalent service, shall be immediately dismissed. Their number is large, and their friends in the Commons are by far too numerous, to permit of such a clearance being easily and speedily made. The House of Commons is, in one sense, essentially corrupt; not that its members condescend to take bribes into their hands, but they secure comfortable places for their relatives, and manage to foist upon the nation a number of useless receivers of public money. All the incompetent sons are thrust into government situations. They who could not enter into partnership with any firm without breeding ruin, are put into government offices without compunction. They must live, and if they damage the public it is not considered to be of any moment. Search the ranks of official life and it will be discovered that a more intolerable set of cripples were never before gathered into one regiment; and, as a rule, the least competent receive the best pay. A real man who has a heart for his work, and who desires to give his country the benefit of his genius and experience finds it difficult to get on in the service, and impossible to rise. It is his daily misfortune to render palpable the incompetent character of his fellow officials, and consequently they hate and oppose him; and should he venture upon suggesting any improved method of performing the duties of his department, he is made a victim and, "sent to Coventry," as one of the heretical reformers who would import honesty and common sense into the public service. We may succeed in our plans so far as to blot out a few, perhaps even a twentieth part, of these incompetent ones, but only at the expense of more labour and pains, anxiety and excitement, than it would cost to get rid of the existing system. We may succeed in destroying the power of patronage quite as easily as we should in securing a partial reform. To do anything of practical value, we must abandon all petty plans, aim at some greater success, and be ready to apply all the forces at our disposal to effect a deeper change.

That greater change involves a reconsideration of our Foreign Relations, and the danger to which we are exposed through the action of France. The enormous annual increase in our outgoings depends entirely upon certain ideas which have been planted and fostered in our minds, in relation to the aims and intentions of the French Emperor, which are supposed to be inimical to the peace and progress of Europe. If those ideas are unsound, if they depend upon a misconception of his motives and intentions, then are we burdening ourselves uselessly, and instead of doing anything whereby the peace of the world is to be promoted we are to be justly charged with dealing unjustly with our own poor at home, while exciting undue alarm abroad.

For being, as we are, at the head of the modern nations, it is impossible for us to manifest fear without creating a sense of danger in the breasts of others; if we declare ourselves menaced, then all the other nations will consider there is cause of fear, and where peace and progress would have been possible, Conservatism and a large expenditure will become supreme.

No reduction can be effected in our national expenditure until this matter be finally settled. All our peddling alterations are but as drops in the ocean compared with the measure of what is annually wasted through the theory we entertain about the intentions of Louis Napoleon. That theory is the body and soul, the animating spirit, of the giant that oppresses us, and we cannot be free until the head of it be stricken off. Let every man ask himself the question whether there be any cause to view France with suspicion, and if he answer, as guided by facts, he will soon shout loudly enough for immediate and immense reductions in our expenditure. If he should answer that our neighbour is to be feared—is dangerous, and is aiming at our ruin, then let him hold his peace about the finances, except it be to cry alike for increase of taxation and increase of war expenditure. Under such circumstances it is not worth while to agitate against the drones who receive pay and do nothing; it will only increase the national loss without largely decreasing the outgoings. We must pay more for the agitation than would be saved by a victory; and when it were gained we should still be in the power of the same harpies, who are always present when the abundance of national spoil is to be shared. They would only be driven from one office, but like rats they would enter another; for while the existing system lasts they who have influence will not permit their incompetent relatives to lack provender when so much can be obtained at the cost of the public. Destroy the offices, and there can then be no call for employes, and to do this, we must make sure of our position in relation to whether Louis Napoleon be the enemy which Conservatism declares, or the friend he is said to be by many who know him more intimately than we do.

It has been urged by many distinguished Englishmen, who are thoroughly acquainted with France, and who appear to speak as honestly as they do authoritatively, that England has nothing of evil to anticipate from the actions of Louis Napoleon. This may be believed without much direct evidence, because it is supported by common sense, for unless we can conceive of him as being the greatest fool in Europe, it is impossible to believe he would interfere with England, in any warlike manner. Such a course would lead to his ruin. All the interests of his family are indissolubly bound up with peaceable English relations. The union is accidental, we grant, but it is none the less real. Were he at war with Great Britain, he would be at war with Europe, for although the German rulers have no great liking for English principles, and would gladly destroy them, it is quite certain they would unite with us against him, because while he continues in power their despotisms are rendered insecure. The supremacy of France threatens kingly despotism all over Europe. While the beneficial results of Universal Suffrage are made so manifest those surrounding nations cannot avoid desiring to share similar advantages. Their rulers are aware of this, and hence the desire to blot out so grave a danger to the security of their own thrones. He represents a new principle—the sovereignty of the national will, and through his interference that principle is triumphant in Italy; while they represent Divine Right to rule wrongly and to ignore the free action of the people they govern. His continuance in authority is thus fatal to their

policy, and hence the readiness with which they would unite with us if we were engaged in war against France, for then they would achieve their object in putting down the universal suffrage principle so hateful in their eyes. And they who can believe him ignorant of a fact so palpable to others, are hardly to be listened to as authorities. There is not a statesman in Europe who is more thoroughly conversant with the policy of its courts than he is; and being a man of the new school, the members of which accept facts irrespective of received theories, he is the least likely of men to engage in a conflict so threatening to his own position and prospects.

It follows, then, that as a question of personal and national policy, Louis Napoleon must labour his utmost to avoid a collision with England. Whatever he may wish as a man, he must, as a politician, endeavour to keep free from a struggle so fatal to his best and dearest interests. And if thus much be conceded we cannot perceive why, abstractedly considered, this English nation should anticipate danger from his policy. And when we turn from the world of ideas, surmises, and suspicion to that of actual facts, there is not a single action to be cited, which, when candidly viewed, will bear the warlike construction. All that we have hitherto held by is a fanciful construction of his aims; we could not know what was in his mind, but only imagined ourselves to know, and our action has been taken upon the assumption that what we fancied was real fact. Yet when attention is turned to the things actually done, no man can say they indicate any other than an anxious desire to preserve the peace.

There never was a French ruler who took so much abuse from us without retaliating. Neither has there been one who so readily submitted to our manifest predilections. We know, indeed, that this is all explained upon the assumption that his conduct is dictated by low and interested motives, and consequently that no praise is to be awarded to him for it. It is easy to find bad motives by which to explain the actions of men, if we allow our imagination to create them, but it is neither just nor generous to do so, especially when good ones are as easily and honestly conceived. And, moreover, it is competent for the French to inquire if our motives are always innocent, pure and disinterested? And even if they be so, whether they are not as liable to be represented as being selfish and dishonourable as those of their Emperor? They must be so, or the writers upon the Continent strangely belie us. The fact is, that we can only infer motives from conduct, and if the latter be good, we should assume the motives were so. Occasionally we shall be deceived, especially when we have to judge from isolated actions; but scarcely ever when there happens to be a course of good conduct, for that, as a rule, must be based upon good motives.

Yet, even if his motives be utterly and coarsely selfish, our security is the same, because his selfishness must prompt him to pursue the path of peace with England. And in seeking, selfishly seeking if men will have it so, to develop the resources of France he is pursuing that course which the best man in the world would pursue. For why should a king have power if it be not to do the best for his nation? And who are the monarchs whose names are to be honoured if not those whose best energies have been devoted towards promoting the growth of the nations over which they held authority? Why, then, should we find so much to suspect and to blame in a course of conduct which is admitted by all intelligent men to be the best adapted for promoting the growth of France and the prosperity of Frenchmen?

P. W. P.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE "SONG OF SOLOMON."

(Continued from page 256.)

It is impossible to do justice to the symbolical system of interpretation to which the "Song of Songs" has been subjected, without quoting a few illustrations from the writings of those who, in celebrated works, have so elaborately developed their views. To do this is now an easy task, for Christian D. Ginsburg has collected specimens of them into the introduction prefixed to his fine translation of the Song itself. They who desire to pursue the subject farther must consult his volume, I shall rest content with citing a few illustrations. And first from the commentary of R. Saaidias who proceeds thus from the seventh verse: "The vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel. Solomon relates in this book the history of the Jews, commencing with their Exodus from Egypt until after the coming of the Messiah, and compares the position of Israel to God, to that of a bride to a bridegroom, because she (Israel) is dear to him, and he to her. When he first takes her from her father's house he calls her my friend, when he brings her to his house he calls her my bride, when she finds favour in his eyes he calls her my sister, and praises her from head to foot; then he is angry with her, and she returns and praises him from head to foot; then he praises her a second time. And, because it is unlawful for a bridegroom and bride to come together without a marriage-contract and witnesses, therefore Solomon begins with the words, 'Let him give me kisses of his mouth;' that is, the commandments and the statutes, comprising both the written and the oral law which the Lord gave to Israel through the pious Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, so that Israel's fame went forth into the world in consequence of their wisdom, as it is written, 'And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty,' &c.,* so much so that many of the nations desired to be gathered under the wings of the Shechinah and become Jews; and these are the mixed multitudes, Jethro and others, and therefore it is said, 'Thy perfumes are good in odour,' that is, the Lord tried them from the departure out of Egypt till their entrance into Canaan whether they would walk in his ways."

Proceeding upon this principle of interpretation, Rashi says: "My opinion is, that Solomon foresaw, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, that Israel would be carried into sundry captivities, and undergo sundry dissolutions; that they would lament in their captivity over their former glory, and recall the former love, which God manifested for them above all other nations; that they would say, 'I will go and return to my first husband, for then was it better with me than now;'[†] that they would acknowledge His kindness and their own rebellion, and the good things which He promised to give them in the latter days, *i. e.*, at the coming of the Messiah.

"This book is written by inspiration, and represents a wife forsaken by her husband, and shut up, longing after him, recalling to her mind her love in youth to her beloved, and confessing her guilt; her beloved sympathising with her affection, and remembering the kindness of her youth, the charms of her beauty, and her good works, which had tied him to her with an everlasting love.

"The design of this book is to show to Israel that God has not afflicted her, *i. e.* Israel, willingly; that though He did send her away, He has not cast her off; that she is still His wife, and He her husband, and that He will again be united to her."

The following is a specimen of Rashi's commentary:—

"1. *The Song of Songs*, &c.—Our Rabbins state, that whenever Solomon is mentioned in this Song, it signifies the Holy One, the King of Peace. This is confirmed by the fact that the name of Solomon's father is not here given, as in

* Ezek. xvi. 14.

† Hos. ii. 9.

Prov. i. 1, and Eccl. i. 1. This most excellent Song was addressed to God by his people, the congregation of Israel. Rabbi Akiba says, that the world was not worthy of the day in which the Song of Songs was given to Israel; for all the Scriptures are holy, but the Song of Songs is most holy. Rabbi Eliezer ben Azariah says, it is like to a king who took a measure of wheat, and gave it to the baker, saying, Produce from it so much flour, so much bran, and so much chaff, and make me a refined and excellent cake of the flour; so all Scriptures are holy, but this Song is most holy; for the whole of this book teaches the fear of God and submission to his kingdom.

"2. *Let him kiss me, &c.*—This Song Israel utters in her captivity and widowhood. Oh that King Solomon would give me kisses of His mouth, as in the time of yore! Some kiss the hand, and others the shoulders; but I desire that He should behave to me as in former days, viz., kiss my mouth as a bridegroom kisses his bride; for Thy caresses are better than all the banquets of wine, and all joys and pleasures. It is a Hebrew idiom to call every banquet of pleasure and joy by the name of wine.* This is the literal sense; but, according to the allegory, this refers to the giving of the Law, and God's speaking with Israel face to face. These favours still continue to be more precious to them than any delights; and as they are assured by God that He will appear again to reveal the secrets and mysteries of the Law, Israel prays to Him for the fulfilment of His promises. This is the meaning of 'Let him kiss me!'

"3. *Thy perfumes, &c.*—A good name is called good oil. The fragrance of Thy name is so excellent that the ends of the earth have smelt it when they heard of Thy fame and of Thy great wonders in Egypt. Thou art oil, and art constantly poured forth, so that Thy sweet odour might be widely diffused. This is the nature of good oil. As long as it is sealed in a bottle, it does not emit any smell; but when the bottle is opened, and the oil poured into a vessel, the smell is diffused. *The maidens love thee.* Jethro, hearing of the wonderful doings of God in Egypt, confessed the God of Israel;† so Rahab, when she heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of the Red Sea, became a proselyte.‡ By the maidens are meant the Gentiles; they are so called because God is represented as a youth.

"5. *I am swarthy, &c.*—You, my companions, let me not be lightly esteemed in your eyes, although my Husband forsook me because of my swarthy; for I am swarthy because of the tanning sun, yet I am comely because of the symmetry of my beautiful limbs. If I am swarthy, like the tents of Kedar, which are discoloured by the rain, in consequence of their being constantly spread out in the wilderness, I shall easily be washed, and be as beautiful as the curtains of Solomon. The allegorical meaning is, the congregation of Israel speaks this to the Gentiles, I am swarthy in my own works, but I am comely in the works of my fathers; and some of my own works even are good. And though I am tainted with the sin of the calf, I have, to counterbalance this, the merit of accepting the Law. Israel calls the Gentiles 'daughters of Jerusalem,' because Jerusalem is to be the metropolis of all nations, as it is predicted, 'And I will give them to thee for daughters;' § and again, 'Ekron and her daughters.'" ||

Comment upon these puerilities is unnecessary, and yet it must be confessed that there is a class of persons who are taken captive by it. They esteem all such "explanations" as being profound, and hence it is that even in modern pulpits men are found who plunder these old books, dress up what they have stolen, and win the applause of their hearers. It is not, however, of much consequence, for as the weak companion the weak, little good could be achieved by giving them a stronger diet. They love spiritual exegesis, and this attenuated folly is what they call Spiritualism. The pity is, that they should pay so much for what could be obtained purer and cheaper from the works of the Rabbis.

But the Rabbis are not unanimous in their interpretation. Some of them maintain that it is to be viewed as an allegory of the intellectual character. Ibn

* Comp. Esth. vii. 2; Isaiah xxiv. 9; v. 12.

† Exodus xviii.

‡ Joshua ii. 11.

§ Ezek. xvi. 61.

|| Josh. xv. 44.

Caspe says: "I submit that this book undoubtedly belongs to the second kind of parables which the teacher of blessed memory (Maimonides), mentions in the beginning of his book, in which all the words used in the comparison must not be applied to the thing compared, just as in the case there quoted, which treats on the subject of a beloved and loved one, like the book before us, with the only difference that the instance there adduced refers to the union of matter and mind, and this book represents the union between the active intellect and the receptive, material intellect, which latter is divided into four parts, the highest of which is the imparted intellect. With all the particulars of this book, Solomon merely designed to hint at the subject in general. It is most certain that he calls here the highest order of the human intellect 'the fairest of women,' and the active intellect 'the gaaceful lover;' frequently the whole intellectual mind is meant by the latter phrase, for this is the meaning demanded in several places of this Book."

This view has been most powerfully defended by Immanuel ben Solomon. In his commentary upon the first verse he says: "Acknowledging the goodness of the Lord, I agree with the opinion of our Rabbins, that this book is the most sublime of all the Books given by inspiration. Expositors, however, differ in its interpretation, and their opinions are divided, according to the diversity of their knowledge. There are some—but these are such as go no further than the material world, and that which their eye sees, looking forward to the good of this world and its glory, to the great reward of their labours and a recompense from God, desiring to be restored to their greatness, and to the land flowing with milk and honey, and to have their stomachs filled with the flesh of the Leviathan, and the best of wines preserved in its grapes—such men interpret this sublime song as having reference to the history of the Patriarchs, their going down to Egypt, their Exodus from thence with a mighty hand and outstretched arm, the giving of the Law, the entry into the land of Canaan, the settlement of Israel in it, their captivity, restoration, the building of the second Temple, the present dispersion, and their final ingathering which is to take place. Such interpreters regard this book, which is holy of holies, as some common book, or historical record of any of the kings, which is of very little use, and the reading of which is only a loss of time. But there are other sages and divines, who have attained to know the value of true wisdom; they are separated from the material world, despise the mere temporal things, heartily desire to know the courts of the Lord, and have a footing in the Jerusalem which is above, and with heart and flesh sing to the living God; these have put off the garments of folly, and clothed themselves in the robes of wisdom, and while searching after the mysteries of this precious book through the openings of the figures of silver, glanced at golden apples of the allegory concealed in it. They, in the vessel of their understanding, traversed its sea, and brought to light from the depth, the reality of the book. Thus they have declared that the book was composed to explain the possibility of a reunion with the incorporeal mind, which forms the perceptive faculty, and influences it with abundant goodness.

"The shepherds, accordingly, represent the corporeal intellect which longs after the influence of the active intellect, and desires to be like it, as much as possible, to cleave to it, and to come up to its standing, which is the ultimate end of its purpose."

(To be continued.)

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"RELIGION" AND THE ESSAYS AND REVIEWS.

IN many of our leading journals, either in their original articles or in the reported speeches and addresses, it has been very distinctly charged against the Essayists and Reviewers that they are "endeavouring to destroy all "religion," and the inference plainly is that they should be treated as dishonourable and dishonest men. There is a measure of scandalous unfairness about this charge, which, as usual in such cases, is Jesuitically supported. For all its force, it depends upon a series of foregone conclusions, which have no foundation in reason or fact. What, for instance, is it that these denouncers mean when they speak of "destroying religion"? There is no word in the English language which has been more frequently used, and which is less generally understood. Strictly speaking, it is a generic term, which needs some definition, in order to render plain the value for which it is used by the speaker. It is the same as "wine;" a man asks another to take a glass, but unless something further be said it will be impossible to know if he mean port, sherry, or any other, out of a hundred kinds. And precisely so with "religion," for the kinds are as numerous as wines. When the Christian Missionary has landed in India, and began to teach the Hindu, the first charge he is called upon to answer is that of "aiming at the destruction of religion." The Hindu race treat him as a man who is moved by no other than that devilish intent, and, much to his astonishment, the Missionary finds that the stone he hurled at the head of the Essayists strikes as powerfully against his own—although two distinct series of ideas and doctrines are intended. The same occurs when the Mussulman endeavours to instruct the Buddhist, or when the Parsee labours to convert the followers of Sakya. So, that, before any conclusions can be deduced, when charges of this character are preferred, it is of the utmost consequence to understand precisely what sort of religion it is that the incriminated persons are trying to subvert.

We are aware that thousands of persons would answer that, as the term is used in England, only one kind can be meant. They say it must mean "the Christian religion, one and indivisible," but this is merely a denial or evasion of the difficulty, because there is no such unity either in theology or in the interpretation of the Christian documents. There are times when all

the Churches unite in brotherly love "to curse the infidel;" when all who profess and call themselves Christians, are to be seen upon the same platform; when Catholic, Churchman, Calvinist, Socinian, and Armenian, are with one accord bent upon condemning the sins of Greg, Newman, Parker, and others equally noble. But anon, we see these divided; the Catholic is not there, and all the others are cursing him; then, again, the Catholic is there, and the Socinian is absent—they are now cursing him. Such brotherly unity do they exhibit that in turn they all curse each other. Many men have gone about to find *the* Christian Church, but have been directed in such contradictory ways, that in despair they abandoned the pursuit. It is not possible to say of any particular Church that it is the embodiment of the Christian idea and life. There are as wide differences, upon fundamental points, between the various European Churches, as exist between the Christian and Buddhist congregations. No man can harmonise Calvinism, Arminianism, Irvingism, Moravianism, Quakerism, Socinianism, Swedenborgianism, and all the other 'isms, which, however, are equally maintained as being the only true Christianity. Both in spirit and letter they are adverse to each other, and if words are to be accepted according to their ordinary value and meaning, then it is utterly impossible to say that the men who call themselves by these names are equally Christians. They are making every effort to extirpate each other, and yet, with a measure of unblushing effrontery that is truly astounding, they unite their forces to denounce these Essayists as men who are endeavouring to destroy the Christian religion; if they could be persuaded first to come to some reasonable and understandable agreement, as regards what constitutes the Christian religion, they would be justified in saying so, if evidence were forthcoming, but under existing circumstances it is impossible they should be able justly to say it, because not agreeing about what it is, for aught they know to the contrary, the said Essayists may be the only pure, consistent, and faithful Christian teachers. It is certain that they lay claim to the right of retaining and bearing the Christian name, and are prepared to maintain in argument the justice of their demand; so that unless sufficient cause can be shown, there is no reason why they should not be respected and ranked with others who assert an equal liberty, and who have expounded the Bible by the light of their own theories.

Here, however, it may be acknowledged, that there are senses in which the charge is true—the Essayists are labouring to destroy religion if it be such a poor affair as some men understand it to be who only know religion as a matter, not for the intellect, but of formal obedience to settled customs of worship, which operate upon the body, but not upon the mind. To them it means accepting by public profession, in a verbal manner, the Bible as a Divine revelation, but beyond this they do not venture to move an inch; for without guilt no man can charge them with ever endeavouring to make its precepts the law of their lives—unless it be such as those which say that "unto him who hath, much shall be given, and from him who hath but little, shall be taken away, even that which he hath." They are ready enough to accept and act upon this, and similar propositions, yet are not willing to be accounted as those from whom the little is to be taken away. Their religion means respectability, and what is called getting on in the world. They go to Church with remarkable regularity, and hold it to be a burning sin and shame for wicked weavers, who have been all the week in a mill, to go out into the fields; and equally to be a positive duty for the clergyman not to

detain them after one o'clock, and if he do, all the heads are turned toward the clock. They cannot permit that the mechanism should work too slowly, or at all beyond the usual hour. If a preacher infringe, they seem to reproach him with unkindness. They pay rates, and perform all their duties, such as cursing the infidels, and subscribing to new Churches, attending at the Dorcas Meetings, which serve the purpose of pious scandal clubs. They subscribe to Missionary Societies; they repeat their printed prayers, and pay a tithe to the Tract Society; they wear spotless neckcloths, and carefully observe the dresses of all true worshippers; they prove their belief in equality before their Maker, by having soft cushions for the rich, and hard benches for the poor; and, finally, they consider themselves to be the adopted children of God—all who dissent from them being natural children of the Devil.

If this be religion,—if mere formalism, assent to a man-constructed, written creed, and mere mechanical worship constitute religion, then there can be no reason for doubting that what is charged against the Essayists is true enough, for they are the deadly enemies of everything mean, formal, unmeaning, and unreasonable. They are at war with Pharisaism in every shape and form; and evidently they will not join with the crowd in accepting it as furnishing a proof of religion, that a man has never missed Church for three Sundays during thirty years. My Lady Tibbets, who has always walked so piously to Church, showing forth her spirit of self-renunciation and deep humility by having a tall footman to carry her gold-clasped Bible and Prayer Book, need not expect that any of these writers will play the part of adulators, or, having no better proof, will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant;" for, sickened by all this cant and disgusting hypocrisy, they have repudiated it, not only as forming no evidence of religious sentiment, but as being utterly at variance with every sound religious theory.

They are opposed to the Godless, truthless, meaningless religion which now prevails; but the world never could boast of men who were more desirous of upholding a religion whose width is as wide as human interests, and whose depth is as fathomless as the love of God. By religion they mean something grander and nobler than is conceived by the mere church-goers; into its categories they would receive every truth, every moral duty, every noble aspiration, and, in fact, all of the good and pure which can beneficially operate for the welfare of mankind; and in place of speaking of religion as associated solely with our future interests, they would speak of it as being inextricably interwoven with all our relations—political, social, and moral. But, above all, in their theory of religion, respect for the truth would hold the highest place. They cannot admit that man is called upon to play with words, or to credit theories written in a book, both of which are opposed to the facts revealed by science and history. Unto them it is clear that the human conscience, instructed by reason and experience, must have fair play as the only reliable guide, and that they who would destroy its authority are as much the enemies of true religion, as of that measure of human progress which its freedom and enlightenment are sure to secure. Thus, it is only by a bold perversion of truth, that it is possible to speak of these writers as trying to destroy religion. They are at war with what men have mistakenly and injuriously associated with it, but are friends to the thing itself, in all its nobleness, purity, and truth.

But they who cry aloud about the "assault upon religion," who speak of the "danger to religion," and hint at the "probability of wicked men suc-

"ceeding in overturning religion," are blind to the fact that their own statements, their evident alarm, form far more telling argument against the reception of their own theories than are to be found in any of the Reviews and Essays. Nobody fears that a series of Essays, written against the theory of gravitation, can have any effect to work its overthrow. No reasonable man would raise the cry of alarm, if some reviews were written intended to subvert the theory of the circulation, or the conviction that ten per cent., with equal security, is a better return for our money than five per cent. The scientific world would only smile if a volume appeared which aimed at overturning our belief in a series of demonstrated physical truths, why, then, should the theological world be so mightily moved? Obviously they are not so well assured of the truth of their theories. And if it be a fact, that our religion can be endangered by seven Essays, the sooner it be gotten rid of the better. It must be a poor, miserable religion if it can be so easily shaken. And when we remember how many millions it costs us to support it, how many thousands are employed to advocate its claims, and maintain its Divine origin, we are disgusted by the cry that the Essays and Reviews can damage its prospects. Only the poorest old tower can be battered down by seven shots, even though they be fired from some Armstrong gun. The Hindu does not fear any seven Essays, written by Christians, against his religion. The Hebrew who treads our streets, carrying his bag of old clothes, smiles when he hears of the danger in which the Christian religion is placed, and says, caustically enough, that it is only a house of cards which can be so easily brushed away. Let Englishmen look to it, and they will find that the priestly alarm indicates the necessity which exists for carefully investigating the nature of that which has been palmed upon them as a religion; let them inquire, and many scales will fall from their eyes; freedom will enlarge her borders; brotherhood will become a fact; and, instead of believing that religion is a form, a creed, they will learn that it means love of truth, and the living a manly life. P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XVIII.

THE FRATICELLI AND THEIR NEW EVANGEL.

WE have already noticed that the doctrine of St. Francis was an essentially democratic one, but it was a democracy of a mild character, and one which hesitated not to acknowledge the supremacy of the spiritual dignitaries of the Church, and looked upon the Pope and the Hierarchy with profound respect. It was, however, the germ out of which a wider movement could easily spring. Already, within a few years after the death of Francis, Anthony of Padua had denounced the worldly and vicious clergy of the time, and had boldly developed the doctrines of Franciscanism into a condemnation of the wealth, luxury, and despotism of the priesthood. Crowds had gathered to hear him, even as in an earlier time to listen to Arnold of Brescia, and in a later to Savonarola, when they struck the same note. The democratic tendencies of the Franciscan doctrine would naturally come out strongly in the feud which had now sprung up, and the example of Anthony would easily point out the way by which the Spirituals should travel in their opposition to the Pope. The Pope had attempted to settle the dispute between them and their brethren by virtually overturning the rule on which their Order was founded; Anthony of Padua had already shown that true Franciscanism was opposed to spiritual despotism; and why not to that of the Pope as well as of the Bishops?

The Popes shewed not their usual wisdom in thus setting in opposition to them the true sons of St. Francis. It was well said that Francis himself would have become a great Heresiarch had not the Church found room and verge enough for him within her bosom; his spirit still survived, and the folly which Innocent III. escaped by accepting the advances of Francis, was committed by his less astute successors when they decided against the views of the Spirituals. The fanaticism, or honest indignation (call it which we may), of the Spirituals thus became connected with a feeling hostile to the Papacy and the Hierarchy; a feeling which circumstances were to develope into open opposition to the dominant Church, accompanied with strange heretical phenomena. The Spirituals began in an attempt to keep intact the Rule of the Franciscan Founder; the Fraticelli, the name by which they afterwards became known, were soon to be concerned in the publication of a new Evangel. Whether the circumstances which led to this are to be looked upon as purely adventitious, or whether some among them did not discern the end in the beginning, it is impossible to say. Suffice it to know that the Franciscan feud was the cause of the Church being set in opposition to that democratic element (now becoming of importance among social forces) which, by the establishment of the Franciscan Order, seemed to be enlisted in her service.

In the midst of the dispute between the two Franciscan parties, John of Parma was elected General of the Order, of whom (as Dean Milman has remarked) it might be said that he was the parent of the Spirituals, if, indeed, St. Francis himself were not that parent. His first act was a visitation of the various Franciscan houses, in order that he might enforce the Rule in all its strictness. The result of this was, of course, only to increase the division. The obnoxious General was ultimately deposed. Just at this juncture, when the feelings of parties were at the highest, a book called "The Everlasting Gospel" began to attract the attention of men, and, for the first time, comes before the notice of the historian. This book is, by some, supposed to be the composition of the Abbot Joachim, some time before this period; but is by others ascribed to John of Parma; it seems probable that the Introduction to it, in which its doctrines were applied to the circumstances of his time, was from his hand. Its most prominent feature was the proclamation of the commencement of the Last Age of the World—that of the Holy Ghost.

The idea upon which this Everlasting Gospel—the new Evangel now given to the world—was based, was this, that there being three persons in the Trinity, there must also be three revelations, three dispensations, and three great epochs in the world's history, the last being the glorious summing-up and completion of the preceding. The first of these was that which proceeded from the Father, the old dispensation, the Law—JUDAISM. The second proceeded from the Son, the dispensation of the New Testament—CHRISTIANITY. Even as the latter had superseded the former, so was it, in its turn, to be superseded by the Gospel of the Holy Ghost, which would be the ETERNAL, the EVERLASTING GOSPEL. The time had now come when this new dispensation should begin; when the Church and the Hierarchy, and all that pertained to the Christian dispensation, the Age of the Son, were to pass away. This new revelation was to supersede and render useless the preceding. What, then, was this new dispensation? Behold! it had already begun. It began with St. Francis, and in the poverty, humility, and Christian perfection of his Rule, the Holy Ghost would renew the world. The book of Conformities, shewing the entire likeness of Francis to Christ, and all that was related of

him by his monkish biographers, acquired, in the light of this new revelation a new force and value. The Fraticelli, or Spirituals, hailed the doctrine with delight, and they looked eagerly for the time when the revelation should be fulfilled in the downfall of Pope and Hierarchy. Here, then, was a strange new birth in the bosom of the Church, not likely long to remain without results.

Within a few years of the appearance of the Everlasting Gospel, with John of Parma's Introduction, there came forth from the hands of another of the Fraticelli—John Peter Oliva by name—a Commentary on the Apocalypse. He saw (and where so many things of totally opposite nature have been seen, we do not know why John Peter should be censured for seeing) in the "Revelation of St. John the Divine" seven states of the Church, typified by the seven seals. These states were: (1.) That of the foundation of the Church—the Apostolic Age; (2.) The Age of the Martyrs; (3.) The Age of Church Contests, the settlement of the Faith, and the confutation of Heresies; (4.) The Age of Hermitism, when the Anchorites fled into the Desert, to subdue the flesh and enlighten the Church by their holiness and wisdom; (5.) That of Monasticism; (6.) The time of the renovation of the true evangelic life, the overthrow of Antichrist, the final conversion of the Jews and Gentiles, and the re-edification of the primitive Church; and (7.) The Age of the final consummation of all things.

Dr. Cumming would have us believe, that the Age thus indicated by Oliva as the sixth is this present nineteenth century; John Peter, his predecessor in Apocalyptic sketching, placed it in his own time, the then present thirteenth century; and John Peter was as likely to be right as this Scotch divine—but he was wrong. So far the two are comparable, but Cumming is Oliva with a difference, that, namely, which divides honesty from dishonesty. The seventh Age of Oliva corresponded with that which Cumming calls the Millenium; it was yet to come, and was to be a wonderful and quiet pre-enjoyment of future glory, as though the Heavenly Jerusalem had descended upon the earth; in it the other life would be foreshadowed, the resurrection of the dead and the glorification of the saints would take place, and the consummation of all things be accomplished. This millennial age he placed at some distance in the future, and taught that the sixth age had but just dawned upon the world; that it commenced with St. Francis, who was the angel of the opening of the sixth seal. This, the Age of the overthrow of Antichrist, was to witness the downfall of the Papacy and the Church, with the whole existing sacerdotal polity. Oliva stigmatised the Roman Church as Babylon, the Scarlet Lady, anticipated, in fact, all the sweet names which modern Evangelism uses for the same purpose. The days of the Church were counted; and now that this worldly, simoniacal, luxurious Church had arrayed herself against St. Francis, she must fall.* These doctrines ran like wild-fire among the Fraticelli, and the Church stood aghast at the danger which threatened her.

It is worthy of remark in passing, how, in the religious world, fanaticism seems to repeat itself through the ages. As, for instance, with the delusion which the Apostles (not to say Christ himself) left as a legacy to the early Christians, that the world was rapidly coming to an end; again and again has the same idea appeared and re-appeared as the moving cause of extraordinary popular excitements, and even in the present day has not altogether lost its force. Then, too, as we look through the centuries of Crusading, the

* See Milman's *Hist. Lat. Christianity*, vol. v., pp. 420-4.

same fact meets us, that again and again one and the same idea may stir the public mind on its religious side; and how often soever repeated, loses none, or but little, of its force. Looking down the history of the heresies which arose from time to time, we find an extraordinary family likeness between them; and though the fact is displayed in these cases in a more limited field, yet it still points to the same characteristic of fanaticism. But there is, perhaps, nothing in the whole course of the history of Christianity which has turned up so many times, and that (allowing for the varying circumstances of different ages) in the same form, as the fulfilment of the prophecies (so called) of the Book of Revelation; Daniel and Isaiah sometimes, indeed mostly, coming in to give their aid. There is not a century of the last seven or eight hundred years of which the Dr. Cumming for the time being has not taught that it was the opening of the sixth seal, the pre-millennial age, or something of that sort; nor has there been a single epoch or crisis in the history of Europe during the same period, in which the prophecy-mongers have not discovered that all the events exactly fitted the "wonderful prophecies" of the Old or New Testament. And even now, week after week, gaping crowds of people, who would be exceedingly scandalised if we denied their right to call themselves sensible and civilised, assemble in Crown Court, even as they did not long ago at the Oratoire at Paris, to hear these same "wonderful prophecies" re-expounded, and made to fit all the current events of the day. Are they any wiser than the Fraticelli of old? It would be ludicrous, if it were not so sad, that such things should be; that this, which was the fanaticism of five hundred years ago, should re-appear in the pulpits of to-day, and that the charlatans who thus play on the credulity of fools should go about respected as God's ministers. Nor will this disgrace be avoided until every man expresses the disgust which so many feel, but hesitate to put into words.

The strange doctrines enunciated by John of Parma and Peter Oliva among the Fraticelli produced a brood of heresies, which are as difficult to distinguish from each other as those attributed to the aggregate of heretical sects, known as the Albigenses; they, however, grew up without the Church, these within. Emerging as the first distinct figure on the scene, we have one Gerard Sagarelli, a new St. Francis—one who will out-Herod Herod—a "beggar of beggars" will he be. Faenza, in Parma, is the scene of his preaching, and, ere long, large numbers gather round him. A new sect is formed, who call themselves Apostolical Brethren. They were, in fact, but Spiritual Franciscans under another name. Now, however, that they have, by giving themselves another name, apparently broken from the Church, the Church will set the Inquisition to work, and the Dominicans are at hand to commence the business of persecution.

It was in the year 1286 that Sagarelli was seized, tried, and condemned to be burnt. A wild account of this scene is extant, by which it is stated, that in the midst of the fire the voice of the heretic was heard, exclaiming, "Help! Asmodeus!" and that, at this potent sound, the fire was quenched. Thrice rekindled, three times the spell prevailed; whereupon the Host was brought, and now, when once again the flames were lighted, and the spell invoked, a sound of wailing was heard in the air, and a mournful cry—"One stronger than ourselves is here!" Now the fire did its work. Such tales as this are valuable, not as being true, but as showing the character of the age which believed them, and of the men who could be supposed to have enacted them. It must have been a grim superstition which the Church

called Christianity in those days, when the "veritable body of its Lord and "Saviour" could thus be represented as used to work counter-charms against demoniac influences, and assist to roast a man alive. How men can talk of Christianity having been one of the great agents of civilisation, in the face of facts like these, is very astonishing. It is true, men will say this was not Christianity. Granted to the full. But if Christianity was not in the Church, where was it during all those dreary centuries of the Middle Age? Non-existent, and therefore non-operant as a civilising force. In fact, it was not till men were civilised by other causes that they reverted to Christianity, and then only partially. Indeed, it may be said that true Christianity has never yet had its full and fair trial as a religious system. So Sagarelli died. A martyr, shall we say? Yes! a martyr for the truth as he saw it; and, like all martyrs, he died not unavenged.

JAS. L. GOODING.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 6.—SAKYA AND HIS EARLY TEACHING.

THERE were others to address Sakya out of the air than those named in our last. The lesser gods or angels of Heaven also sang his praises, and set forth his glory as a teacher of men. Here, for instance, is one passage of praise in which the hero is sufficiently flattered and exalted. And this speech is reported as coming from Divine lungs: "Reverence be to thee, Oh "Nuni! whose mind is so profound, whose instruction is very pleasant, for "thou art the prince of the wise. Thy instruction is as full of melody as the "voice of Brahma's daughter. Thou hast achieved the highest degree of "perfection. Thou art the Most Holy. Thou art our shelter, our refuge, "and our aid. Thou, with loving kindness, art the protector of the world. "Thou art the best physician, that takest away every pain, and curest all "diseases. Thou art the creator of light. Lord do thou assuage the afflictions of both angels and men, by pouring upon them a shower of the food "of immortality. Thou art immoveable, firm fixed like the holy mountain.

"To thee who art clean and pure from the taint of sin, who art the "immaculate and spotless; who art celebrated in all the three worlds, who "hast found the three kinds of knowledge, reverence be unto thee.

"To thee, who hath a tranquil mind, and clearest up the troubles of evil "times, who instructest with love all human beings, reverence to thee.

"Muni, whose heart is at rest, who delightest in giving explanations so "to remove every doubt; who hast undergone rigorous suffering on account "of mortal beings, thy intention is pure, thy practices perfect. Teacher of "the four truths. Rejoicer in emancipation, who, being free, desireth now "to liberate others, reverence unto thee. The powerful and industrious "Mara, coming to thee (for evil purposes), him didst thou overthrow by thy "understanding, diligence, and mildness, and found at that time the supreme "standard of immortality. Reverence be to thee, for thou hast overcome "the whole host of deceit."

There are several hymns and heavenly speeches of the same character and texture with this; but as our hero is not fairly to be held accountable for any of them, either in their historical nature or their sentiments, we need not note them further. He may have preached unto men in symbolical language about what he felt, when set free from the despotism of starvation, and loosed

into the world of reasonable enjoyment, restrained only by moral laws, but we have no evidence to justify us in saying either that he believed himself to be thus spoken to by the Heavenly powers, or that he would have tolerated the assertion of his being so far above the ordinary level of mankind as is set forth in these passages. There was that modesty and straightforwardness about him which are ample evidence that he neither believed in such statements, nor wished others to do so. It is particularly doubtful if any such stories were circulated during his lifetime.

But although "freed and blessed by heaven," Sakya felt considerable doubts, and paused long in hesitation, as to whether he should assume the work of a teacher; for why should he arrogate to himself to be wiser than others? By means of even a small measure of thought, it is easy enough to discover the real man, as he lies hidden beneath all the strange stories told of his life. At this point, especially, he becomes plainly enough to be seen, by every thinker, as a thoroughly earnest, soul-moved man, who, awe-stricken, trembled in presence of his work. All around he saw men who had honestly grown up in the firm belief that Brahminism, with its endless system of gods and heroes, its transmigrations, and infinite stages of progress, were the Heaven-imparted verities; men who had grown grey in the belief of the superiority of certain classes, and the peculiar heaven-given sanctity of certain books; and how should this man dare to antagonise, and set at naught such a time-honoured faith? Heart-heavy, but not despairing, he sat down to ponder the matter over, and soon divided the people around himself into three sections. The first class he conceived to be made up of those who were hopelessly sunk into the mire of error—men who had grown old in folly; who, from their youth up, had been accustomed to accept the opinions of others, without ever deeming it necessary, or even conceiving the idea of reasoning for themselves; for this class he confessed he could do no good. The second section were those who had awoke to the consciousness of truth, and who had bravely fought out the battle, so that they had gained knowledge, and were freed from the evil influences of the world. What can a man do for these? They stand in no need, and therefore may be passed over. The third class, however, were differently situated. They had not found the truth, but only that there was a truth to be discovered, and were anxious, very anxious, to discover it. Could they but succeed, then all would go well—else evilly. What! then, shall these men perish? Shall they go down to the pit through the lack of a teacher? May the heavens forbid! was the prayer of Sakya, and hence he cried: "Come, then, hate, and envy, and detraction, and all the ills "that merit must from the unworthy take." All these shall be patiently borne, or, better still, shall be valorously battled against, rather than that within himself an upbraiding conscience shall find cause to speak in tones of anger. It is true, indeed, and he knew it beforehand, that everywhere men would rise up to fight against him, and hatefully reject his teaching; yet what mattered? If they did wrong, how would that justify him in neglecting his duties, or in evading to speak the truth unto all men? Indian as he was, there was the noblest blood coursing through his veins, and could we only see a little more clearly through those old wrappages of Pali and Sanscrit, we believe that a nobler and more self-sacrificing soul never moved amongst men. From the jaw-bone we learn the habits of the ancient Saurians. Yet it would be pleasant could we just come at one in all its perfection. And although a Sakya, through the fragments of him read by the light of other men, is clear enough, we are fain to wish he were more perfectly embalmed.

He travelled and taught, and everywhere found earnest followers. It appears that during the first year of his preaching his disciples became numerous enough to justify him in calling a kind of conference, and before this he fully unfolded his doctrines. His travelling and teaching extended over forty years; during the whole of that time he wrought many "mighty miracles," and won over many thousands, or, as the records say, "many tens of thousands of converts." The people to this day, rejoice in relating how "he raised the dead" and "gave sight to the blind;" how he fed thousands, and at other times enabled thousands to remain for a long time without food. On one occasion, while preaching to a great multitude, he caused it to rain, and "those of the people who desired to be wetted were so, while others who desired the contrary remained dry." On one occasion, after predicting the increase of a village into a city, and that as a city it should suffer under the assaults of fire, and water, and treachery, he was invited to cross the Ganges, and with his disciples he did so by walking upon the waters. The people of Bengal still show our English travellers the identical ferry which still bears the name of "Galamas Gate." On one occasion, a courtesan went forth to meet, to question, and to do him honour. He sat down and conversed with her quite as freely as unto others, and this, much to the astonishment of all his followers. At the close of their interview she invited him to dine with her on the succeeding day, and without hesitation he accepted the invitation. Shortly afterwards the head men of the city waited upon him, and invited him to a repast—surely, as they thought, he would prefer dining with them rather than with a common courtesan. Thus they had decided it, but he did otherwise. He will not leave her for them, and, indeed, has she not great need to hear him? The next day saw him with his disciples at the feast she had provided, and there he preached a sermon into her heart, which was heard by many willing listeners. On another occasion, when about to cross a river, from the waters of which he wished to drink, it was found to be muddy from the excitement of the waters, through the passage of cattle—he worked a miracle, and behold the water was instantly purified. None knew how this was done, but all drank freely of the water, and were satisfied. Thus he passed from city to city, always depending upon the free gifts of the people, neither carrying purse nor scrip, yet on all occasions being bountifully supplied. And as he went on his way he worked his wonders, and when the people were drawn together, he preached unto them freely, and declared his new gospel of work and energy.

But what did he teach? This is the one important question, for, after all, we know but too well, that wise works and good intentions are not inseparably connected. His teaching may soon be comprehended. He gave ten commandments, and we adopt the translation given by Malcolm, the Inspector sent to India and China by the great American Missionary Society. He gives them in his first volume in the following order:—

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|---|--|
| 1. Thou shalt not kill. | 7. Avoid the use of injurious speech and foul words. |
| 2. Thou shalt not steal. | 8. Covet not another's wealth. |
| 3. Thou shalt not commit adultery. | 9. Abhor conversation which admits detraction. |
| 4. Thou shalt not lie. | 10. Be not suspicious.* |
| 5. Thou shalt not drink any intoxicating liquors. | |
| 6. Desire not the death of your enemy. | |

* See Upham's Sacred Books, iii, 186.

The nature of these commands is so obviously just, that at least four of them may be looked upon as truisms; but the first is understood by all the Buddhists as binding them "not to take the life of any living thing." And rigidly enough they adhere to the letter of the command. A strict Buddhist will never drink water unless it has been delicately strained, lest he should destroy the life of animalcules. Some of them wear a piece of muslin over their mouths while walking, lest, peradventure, gnats or any insects floating in the air, should pass into their mouths and be destroyed. They are dirty in the extreme, as one result of their ideas, for the worst of vermin are allowed to remain on their clothing, rather than that the law should be broken. Not that Sakya taught this, or anything so absurd, but it is in this way they apply the general law. Then, too, as regards intoxicating liquors, the Buddhists are very particular in carrying out the law, and wisely so. We know, indeed, that there are many good men who differ from us in that opinion, but differ as men may upon any mere abstract view of the question, it is quite certain that if the entire population of this country abstained from such liquors, there would not be above a tithe of the misery, disease, wretchedness, sin, and ignorance which now exists. And certainly it is a very extraordinary fact, that it is only in what are called Christian countries that men get drunk. If any do so in other countries, it is only after having been contaminated by the Christians, for the Sacred Writings of Buddhists, Brahmins, and Mahometans, unite in denouncing the use of such beverages, and the experience history affords, shows clearly enough that a heavier curse than their use never descended upon mankind.

P. W. P.

WITCHCRAFT: THE WITCH SABBATH.

IN a former article we placed before our readers a few facts connected with "the Church and Witchcraft;"* but there are others equally worthy of notice, and which, in modern times, it seems impossible to imagine could ever have been believed by the people. The most remarkable was the belief in what is known as the Witch Sabbath, or "General assembly of wizards and witches, to spend an evening with Satan." It appears to have obtained its name as "the Sabbath," because of being held upon the Friday night, which included the earliest portion of the Hebrew day of rest. There was no stated place for the whole of the meetings; but once a-year they all gathered on the Brocken, and this was the grand gathering of all the evil spirits then in Christendom.

Charles Mackay has condensed the old narratives into the following descriptive account:—In France and England the witches were supposed to ride uniformly upon broomsticks; but in Italy and Spain, the devil himself, in the shape of a goat, used to transport them on his back, which lengthened or shortened, according to the number of witches he was desirous of accommodating. No witch, when proceeding to the Sabbath, could get out by a door or window, were she to try ever so much. Their general mode of ingress was by the keyhole, and of egress by the chimney, up which they flew, broom and all, with the greatest ease. To prevent the absence of the witches from being noticed by their neighbours, some inferior demon was commanded to assume their shapes and lie in their beds, feigning illness, until the Sabbath was over.

When all the wizards and witches had arrived at the place of rendezvous,

* See Ante, pp. 225-228.

the infernal ceremonies of the Sabbath began. Satan, having assumed his favourite shape of a large he-goat, with a face in front and another in his haunches, took his seat upon a throne; and all present, in succession, paid their respects to him, and kissed him in his face behind. This done, he appointed a master of the ceremonies, in company with whom he made a personal examination of all the wizards and witches, to see whether they had the secret mark about them, by which they were stamped as the devil's own. This mark was always insensible to pain. Those who had not yet been marked, received the mark from the master of the ceremonies, the devil at the same time bestowing nicknames upon them. This done, they all began to sing and dance in the most furious manner, until some one arrived who was anxious to be admitted into their society. They were then silent for a while, until the new-comer had denied his salvation, kissed the devil upon the Bible, and sworn obedience to him in all things. They then began dancing again with all their might, and singing these words,

"Alegremos, Alegremos!
Que gente va tenemos!"

In the course of an hour or two they generally became wearied of this violent exercise, and then they all sat down and recounted the evil deeds they had done since their last meeting. Those who had not been malicious and mischievous enough towards their fellow-creatures, received personal chastisement from Satan himself, who flogged them with thorns or scorpions till they were covered with blood, and unable to sit or stand.

When this ceremony was concluded, they were all amused by a dance of toads. Thousands of these creatures sprang out of the earth, and standing on their hind legs, danced, while the devil played the bagpipes or the trumpet. These toads were all endowed with the faculty of speech, and entreated the witches to reward them with the flesh of unbaptised babes for their exertions to give them pleasure. The witches promised compliance. The devil bade them remember to keep their word; and then, stamping his foot, caused all the toads to sink into the earth in an instant. The place being thus cleared, preparation was made for the banquet, where all manner of disgusting things were served up and greedily devoured by the demons and witches; although the latter were sometimes regaled with choice meats and expensive wines from golden plates and crystal goblets; but they were never thus favoured unless they had done an extraordinary number of evil deeds since the last period of meeting.

After the feast, they began dancing again; but such as had no relish for any more exercise in that way, amused themselves by mocking the holy sacrament of baptism. For this purpose the toads were again called up, and sprinkled with filthy water; the devil making the sign of the cross, and all the witches calling out, "*In nomine Patrici, Aragueaco Petrica, agora! agora! Valentia, jouando goure gaita goustia!*" which meant, "In the name of Patrick, Petrick of Aragon, now, now, all our ills are over!" When the devil wished to be particularly amused, he made the witches strip off their clothes and dance before him, each with a cat tied round her neck, and another dangling from her body, in form of a tail. When the cock crew they all disappeared, and the Sabbath was ended. This is a summary of the belief which prevailed for many centuries nearly all over Europe, and which is far from eradicated, even at this day.—We shall call our readers attention to the overthrow of witchcraft in our next.

P. W. P.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE "SONG OF SOLOMON."

(Continued from page 272.)

BEN SOLOMON gives his reasons for undertaking to write upon the subject, and then he goes on with his commentary. Of the first section he says:—"Chap. i. 2,—ii. 17,—represents man, who either ideally or actually, was in the garden of Eden before he sinned, and brought into activity his choice for good and evil; as it is written, 'And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*' The Lord permitted, or commanded him to eat of all the fruit of the garden; but He pointed out to him one tree of which he was not to eat, lest he should die; as it is said, 'But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.'† And if, as man, he had the choice to eat of the tree of life, he might have eaten and lived for ever, without mortification or trouble; as it is written, 'Behold, I have set before thee life and good, and death and evil: choose, therefore, of the life, that thou mayest live.'‡ This represents one who endeavours to learn wisdom in its order, but is afraid lest he should be terrified when looking up to God, seeing that his fruit is not yet ripe. This is the meaning of what is said in the section, 'Turn, my beloved, and be thou like a gazelle or a young hind upon the mountains of separation;' § and again, 'Catch us the foxes, the little foxes, that destroy the vineyards; for our vineyards are in blossom.' || This teaches that the fruit was not yet ripe. There is no mention in this first section that the shepherdess did eat of the fruit. Her saying, 'I desired to sit down under its shade, and its fruit is sweet to my taste,' ¶ merely declares her desire. The whole, therefore, of the first section refers to the mind of man when still young, prior to its developing the end for which its existence was designed, and when the powers of the body have still the dominion over it, for he has not pursued his studies farther than mathematics and physics. The first section is again subdivided into two parts. The first part begins chap. i. 2, and ends ii. 7, and represents one who fears God and shuns evil; but his knowledge of God is derived from tradition, and has no wisdom of his own. And the second part (chap. ii. 8 to iii. 1) represents one who has studied mathematics and physics."

His attempt to establish this theory is very closely carried out through the commentary; and although the reader may not be convinced of the soundness of his views, he cannot fail to be interested and amused.

The Christian expositors of this book seem to have been endeavouring to outdo their Hebrew predecessors, for their absurd theories are less tolerable. Augustin commenting upon the "seventh verse" of the "first chapter"—"Tell me, 'O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest thy flock, where,' &c., says: "It is one testimony in behalf of the church in Africa, which lies in the meridian of the world. The church asks Christ to tell her where the true church is, where it feeds and reclines. The bridegroom answers, In the meridian, I feed in the meridian, I recline in the meridian. The church is in other parts, but in Africa is its meridian. This is the language of believers out of Africa, who also say, 'For why should I be as one roaming among the flocks of thy companions?' that is, why remain concealed and unknown? Other churches are not thy flock, but the flocks of thy companions." Upon the adjuration, 'I adjure you,' &c. vii. 7, he observes: "The church in these words addresses her own daughters.

* Gen. ii. 8, 9.
§ Song of Songs ii. 17.

† Ibid. 17.
|| Ibid. 15.

‡ Deut. xxx. 15.
¶ Ibid. 3.

"She is a field of God, fruitful in graces, to which by loving Christ the martyrs come, whom he wishes to lay down their lives as lovingly as he laid down his life for them. 'Take us the Foxes,' &c.,* that is, withstand, confute, subdue, heretics that injure the ecclesiastical vines. Bind them by Scripture testimony, as Samson bound the Foxes together, and put fire to their tails, by warning them of the condemnation they have deserved." In ch. iv. 16, 'Awake, O north, and come, thou south wind,' &c., he says: "The north wind is from the cold icy regions of the devil and his angels, and the south wind is the spirit of grace blowing at noon from warm and shining regions, that cause the spices to flow out, as the apostle says, 'We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish.'"

Theodorit of Syria, wrote a commentary upon this book, and he seems to have felt himself called upon to do battle in favour of a "spiritual" interpretation. "There are some," says this prelate, "who do not admit that the Song of Songs has a spiritual sense, and make of it such a texture of fables, which is unbecoming even to the insane. Some maintain that Solomon is here celebrating himself and the daughter of Pharaoh; others take the Shulamite, not as Pharaoh's daughter, but as Abishag; and others, again, considering the thing with a little more reverence, call this book a Royal address, and take 'the bride' to be the people of Israel, and 'the bridegroom,' the king. I have, therefore, found it necessary, before proceeding with the interpretation, first, to refute this false and pernicious interpretation, and then to fix the obvious design of this book.

"These people ought to remember that those holy fathers were much wiser, and had more spiritual minds than they had, that this book was incorporated in the Sacred Writings, and that the Church revered it for its spiritual meaning, &c.

"Through Manasseh and the destruction of Jerusalem, the writings of the Old Testament were lost, but the Holy Spirit restored them to Ezra by inspiration. Now the Holy Spirit could not have inspired any other than a Divine book.

"Because the holy fathers saw this, they have either written devotional commentaries on the entire book, or filled their writings with its thoughts, as for instance, Eusebius and others, who were near the apostolic age. Now, are we not to believe these holy fathers? not believe the Holy Ghost? not obey the voice of God rather than our own opinions? We must so deal with the sacred Scriptures as not to regard letters merely, but draw out the hidden spirit from obscurity.

"The bridegroom' is Christ, 'the bride' his church; 'the daughters of Jerusalem' are pious, but still unfinished souls (young in a Christian sense), which have not as yet attained the perfection of the bride, but imitate her example; 'the companions of the bridegroom' are either the angels or the prophets."

The following is a specimen of his commentary:—

"1. *The Song of Songs, &c.* This book is called *The Song of Songs*, because all other songs in the writings of Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms are made for this song, which is not amatory, but a song about the marriage of the Divine Bridegroom with the Church.

"2. *Let him kiss me, &c.* This is the language of the spouse offering a petition to the Father of the Bridegroom; for she has known both the promises made to Abraham and the prophecies of Jacob; as well as the prophecies of Moses, respecting her beloved, and the description of his beauty and power as given in the Psalms; 'Thou art more beautiful than the sons of men,' &c.; she has learned that her beloved, who is adorned with beauty and grace, is both God and the eternal Son; 'For thy throne, Oh God, is for ever and ever,' &c. Having recognised the beauty, strength, riches, dominion, and power of the bridegroom which he displays above all things, world without end, she draws nigh to him to embrace him and to kiss him in Spirit. Let none whose spirit is low, and who only tastes that which is earthly, be misled by the expression 'kisses.' Let him remember that we ourselves embrace and kiss the limbs of the beloved at the mysterious

* Song of Songs, ii. 15.

time (the Lord's Supper), and that which we see with our eyes, store up in our hearts, and, as it were, feel ourselves in conjugal embraces; so that it is with us as if we were with him, embracing and kissing him, after, as the Scriptures say, 'love has driven away fear.' Therefore it is that the Bride wishes to be kissed by the Bridegroom himself."

This is a sort of sublimated nonsense, which, however, had a meaning for the writer, although it is hardly to be caught by the reader. There are some who can catch it, or imagine they do, which suits them quite as well. But if we give tangibility to their ideas, and insist upon having them represented under distinct forms, then they shrink back and cry unto us to forbear. The Church kissing Christ is a very subtle idea, so subtle that it cannot be conceived. For since we have had a Church it has kept as far from Christ as possible. It calls upon his name and kisses him in spiritual fancy, but eschews his example and violates his law. There is no question to be raised about the facts, and hence the question is confined within such narrow limits that each man may boldly answer how far he thinks they are justified who say they kiss the bridegroom, and deal with him as man deals with the object of his interest, love, and devotion.

But before turning to the poem itself it is necessary to look at a few more of these fine commentaries in which "so much heavenly light is thrown upon heavenly words." There is the great Crusading St. Bernard who figures so largely in Church history; he preached eighty-six sermons upon this book, but advanced no farther than the "second chapter." Gilbert Porretanus continued it up to his death, but only succeeded in preaching forty-eight, which brought it down to the "fifth chapter." He who desires to read without amusement, instruction, or excitement of thought, had better read these discourses. St. Bernard says of the whole work:—"The unction and experience can alone teach the understanding of "such a Song. It is not to be heard outside, for its notes give no sound in the "street; but she who sings it, she hears it and he to whom it is sung, that is the "bridegroom and the bride." He divides the Song into three parts; in the first part the bridegroom leads the bride into the garden, and in the second he conducts her into the cellar, and in the third he takes her home into his apartments. Upon the words, *Let him kiss me, &c.*, which he explains as referring to the incarnation of Christ, he remarks, "O happy kiss, marvellous because of amazing "condescension; not that mouth is pressed upon mouth, but God is united with "man."

Luther could not reconcile his mind to believe that the Song of Songs describes the conjugal union of Christ, the bridegroom, with the bride, i.e. the Church as a whole, or with the soul of every individual believer. He therefore rejected the allegorical interpretation of the Fathers, and advanced a new theory, viz., "that "the bride is the happy and peaceful State under the dominion of Solomon, and "that the Song is a hymn of praise, in which Solomon thanks God for the obedience rendered unto him as a divine gift: for where the Lord does not direct and "rule there is neither obedience nor happy dominion, but where there is obedience "or a happy dominion there the Lord lives and kisses and embraces his bride "with his word, and that is the kisses of his mouth."

Instead of discussing this theory I pass on to the great commentary of Brightman, whose criticisms are "wonderful for their spiritual fulness." He is careful to comment upon every word, and the following specimen will serve as a good example: '*His belly is as bright ivory, &c.*—By the belly or bowels, bright as 'ivory overlaid with sapphires, may be understood the two Sacraments. For the 'word of God is open to the view of every one, as the mouth and countenance, 'neither is it wont to be hid from strangers; but the Sacraments serve only for the 'household, as the bowels, which are appointed only to that body whose members 'they are, but serve to no use for strangers. These things therefore as it were, 'with the finger, point to those times of John Wicliff (1370), who taught openly, 'that the substance of the material bread and wine remains in the sacrament of 'the altar; the accidents of bread remain not without the subject in the same 'Sacrament; Christ is not really in the Sacrament, in proper presence corporally. 'Berengarius spoke against this wicked error 200 years before, but the time was

'not yet come wherein the hands of the bridegroom should be seen full of rings, 'whence his empire wanted success.' This is making history out of fancy; and anything you please out of poetry. The great pity is that these learned gentlemen as a rule never find out the prediction until it is far too late to profit by its teaching.

Bishop Patrick, would not admit any literal meanings, but found, almost in every word, some delightful mystery. Even the words, "Thy navel is like a round goblet which wanteth not liquor; thy belly is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies;"* at which so much umbrage has been taken, this pious prelate says, may mean "the two Sacraments which the Church administers to her children; the Font in Baptism being represented by the former, and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by the other part of the figure."†

Another Bishop, Lowth, took a far more reasonable view of the poem. "The subject of the Canticles," says this learned Prelate, "appears to be the marriage-feast of Solomon, (who was, both in name and reality, the Prince of Peace); his bride is called Shulamite. . . . Who this wife of Solomon was, is not clearly ascertained; but some of the learned have conjectured, with an appearance of probability, that she was the daughter of Pharaoh, to whom Solomon was known to be particularly attached. May we not, therefore, with some shadow of reason, suspect that, under the allegory of Solomon choosing a wife from the Egyptians, might be darkly typified that other Prince of Peace, "who was to espouse a church chosen from among the Gentiles?"

As to the explanation of the allegory, this learned prelate properly advises, "that we ought to be cautious of carrying the figurative application too far, and of entering into a precise explication of every particular; as these minute investigations are seldom conducted with sufficient prudence not to offend the serious part of mankind, learned as well as unlearned."‡

Whilst the battle was hotly waging, here in England, between those who upheld the allegorical, and those who sought to enforce the literal, interpretation of this poem, Dr. Pye Smith formed an important addition to the ranks of the literalists; he denounced the allegorical method as "contrary to all laws of language, and dangerous to real religion." He regarded this Song as "a pastoral eclogue, or a succession of eclogues, representing in the vivid colours of Asiatic rural scenery, with a splendour of artificial decoration, the honourable loves of a newly-married bride and bridegroom, with some other interlocutors."§ From this time the number of those who defended the literal interpretation gradually increased. In 1838 a version of chapter ii. 8-17 appeared in the "Congregational Magazine;"|| the translator boldly affirmed that "it celebrates the beautiful scenery of the spring, the attachment of two individuals to each other, and their meeting in that season of nature's gaiety and loveliness." But in Germany it is that the most able defenders of the literal interpretation and true design of this poem have appeared; English theologians, as a general rule, having adopted a "spiritual," or allegorical, or else a prophetic, rendering of it.

(To be continued.)

* Chap. vii. 2.

+ Paraphrase and Annotations on the Song of Songs, *in loco*.

‡ See Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews, Lect. xxx.; p. 346, Gregory's Translation, Third Edition.

§ Script. Test. to the Messiah, vol. i. book i. c. 2, note A.

|| For 1838. p. 471, *et seq.*

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CAN A FREETHINKER MAKE OATH IN OUR COURTS?

IN consequence of some painful occurrences in our Courts of Justice, of a recent date, two questions of immense importance to Englishmen, both as citizens and moralists, have been raised; and as Religious Freethinkers we could not allow them to pass away without recording our opinion as to their merits. The first is this, whether, under existing circumstances it is not absolutely necessary, in order to secure that equal justice shall be done to all citizens, that a change be made in the mode of administering the law; and, secondly, if, until such changes be made, a Freethinker may honourably take the oath as it is at present administered,—that is, without doing violence to the proper use and meaning of its terms.

The necessity for a change cannot be denied by any honest man who has made himself acquainted with the facts of the case. As the law now stands a Freethinker may be robbed and murdered with impunity; for although ten men of his own persuasion actually saw the deed committed, and seized the thieves and murderers, while the blood of the slain was still wet upon their hands, the criminals may escape punishment, because, as the law now provides, the Freethinkers are disqualified and prevented from giving evidence. All that is needed is for the defendants' counsel to ask each witness if he "believes in a future state of rewards and punishments;" when, the answer being in the negative, the case ends, because, although they saw the whole transaction, they are declared incompetent to bear witness. Thus, as it was with the Catholics during some part of the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James, the Freethinkers are placed beyond the pale of the law. They may pour forth their blood, or pay their taxes, but are not to be protected by the community of which they are members; they may be known, as many of them have been and still are, as honourable, noble-minded, and self-sacrificing men, so far as all citizen and other duties are concerned; still, when thus assailed and slain, no justice can be had unless there are persons who "believe in a future state of rewards and punishments" prepared to swear against the criminals. Such a condition of things cannot be permitted to exist any longer. For now that the fact has become known, every witness who entertains speculative opinions at variance with those of the orthodox party will be subjected to the questioning process in order to get rid of his

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testimony, and thus a condition of things will arise whose effect will be to protect the murderer and thief from punishment for his crime.

Moreover, the course pursued is self-contradictory. The object of our public examinations is to elicit the truth from all parties who present themselves to give evidence; and clearly, if their uncorroborated testimony is considered to be sufficient to satisfy the Court upon one point, it should be taken upon others. To say that a man's word shall be taken, and shall not be taken, is absurd; and yet it is the being guilty of that absurdity of which we have cause to complain of our Courts. A man is placed in the witness-box, to testify that "he saw the prisoner steal a purse;" but before his evidence is given, he is asked if he "believes in a future state of rewards "and punishments." Here are two distinct questions, to which a liar may give false answers. The witness replies to the second question in the negative, and is told to stand down. The Court will not permit him to give evidence, because, if he does, it cannot be believed. But the only reason it can assign for not believing his testimony is based upon this—that it actually believes the evidence he has already given. It has no ground upon which to stand, in declaring that it *does not* believe the witness, except this, that it *does* believe him. So that every Judge who refuses to allow a witness to give his evidence, must declare him to have spoken the truth. He can only put him out of Court upon the assumption of his having uttered the whole truth; and surely, while a witness is open to this objection, that the Court, believing his word cannot permit him to testify, there must be something so radically wrong in the English law as to render its reform imperatively necessary. We would not argue for mere fanciful changes; but when cases of this kind occur, it must be obvious to every intelligent man, that the dignity of our Courts renders a change necessary. We do not argue the point as it may be argued, that the Freethinker should be protected as a citizen, the same as all others are, but we urge that, if our Courts are not to be stultified, if our administration of justice is not to be made a matter for mockery, and if the Judges are not to be compelled to say they believe and do not believe a witness, then a change must be made in our "swearing system."

But, if no such change be made, is it right, when permitted to do so, and no objections are raised, for the Freethinker, or even for the Atheist, to take the oath as it is now administered? Great difference of opinion exists upon this point; there are many Atheists who refuse to take it, while others profess to find no difficulty in complying with the established custom. We believe it to be the duty of every man to take the oath, in all those cases where his refusal involves the infliction of a wrong upon society. For instance, say that a murderer, or a thief has been seized, and that the witness refuses to take the oath which will lead to his conviction; through his refusal he inflicts the great wrong upon society, of loosing an unpunished criminal to prey upon its members. He escapes one personal "evil," but only at the cost of inflicting a greater upon his fellow-citizens. And if it be the duty of a good man to labour his best toward protecting his neighbour from injury, it will follow that the Atheist is bound to pursue the course through which that protection may be secured.

The question is raised, however, if it be an "evil" to take the oath. We deny that it is so. There is no sin in taking it, although there may be weakness in demanding that it shall be taken. The oath is not a confession of faith in which all who take it are bound to agree, for, were that the case,

but few men could be sworn. It is nothing more than a solemn form of declaring that the speaker intends to speak the truth. The idea underlying the form is simply this, that all men are bound by the most solemn ties to testify only to that which is true, to the best of their belief; and if certain words are used which may be variously understood by different theological schools, as happens in England, that is but the accidental and not the essential element of the case; the form is but the shell, of which the kernel is the pledge—to utter the truth, and that only.

If the oath ran thus, "I do solemnly swear to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me the king of wizards;" although a man did not believe in witches or wizards, he could conscientiously swear, because his pledge was, not that he believed there to be such a king, but simply, that it was his resolve to speak only the honest truth. So, also, if a man were in a country in which the usual oath ended with, "So help me the all-powerful king of this realm," he could conscientiously swear, for in doing so he would merely comply with a form, and would not say that he believed the king to be all-powerful. We could take the oath, and still smile at the weakness of those who imposed it. There would be no evil, no sin on our parts, for the only sin possible in the case, would be in so far violating its spirit as to utter that which was untrue. Hence, we have no doubt upon our minds about even the Atheist taking the oath. He intends to speak the truth, and as that is the only thing desired by the spirit of the oath, he may be guilty of sin in refusing to take it, but not in pursuing the usual course—his object simply being to promote the ends of justice.

Of course when he has complied, we hold him to be still free to agitate against the swearing system. He complies with the demands of society, because while things are as they are, in no other way can justice be done; yet it is incumbent upon him to labour his utmost, so as to secure the establishment of a better system. Until that be introduced, he is bound to do his best towards assisting in the administration of justice according to the existing forms. Were we called upon to-morrow to give evidence, we would not refuse the oath, but should take it under the conviction, that by doing so, we should best perform our duty towards society. And if it happened that evil-disposed men chose to declare that by taking the book and kissing it, we declared our belief of its having been written by inspiration, their injustice would not trouble us. There is no such statement of religious faith in the words employed, and if men are sufficiently evil-disposed to supplement the form, and condemn us for doing that which we did not do, the burden of guilt rests with them, and with them we should leave the annoyance.

Should it happen, however, that we were asked if we believed that the Bible was written by inspiration, our answer would be that in another place we should feel at liberty to reply, but not so there. Courts of Justice are not proper places in which to debate theological questions, and, consequently, it would be our aim to protest against their being thus abused. And if intolerance resolves to degrade our Courts into theological arenas, the Freethinker is bound to abstain from rendering to it the assistance it asks at his hands. We may decline to answer impertinent questions anywhere. Thus, if it should happen that the Freethinker is called upon to answer questions which have no bearing upon the case in hand, let him firmly decline to answer them. He is bound to tell the truth, and bound to accede to the usual forms rather than to permit injustice being done; but he is equally bound to remain silent when impertinent and irrelevant questions are proposed. P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XIX.

DOLCINO AND PRIESTLY VENGEANCE.

SAGARELLI was not to die unavenged we said. From his ashes sprang up Dolcino, a man cast in an heroic mould. He was both a wiser leader and a more determined adversary than Sagarelli, whose place, as the head of the Apostolical Brethren, he was now to supply. Expelled from Italy with his followers, after the death of Sagarelli, he and they found refuge in the Valleys of Piedmont, and there, in that land, to be consecrated by so many heresies, and the noble endurance of persecution through so many centuries, Dolcino and his followers lived for a time in peace. They seem to have added some peculiar doctrines to those of the Eternal Gospel; or, as is probable, the doctrines already preached among the Fraticelli received a different setting at the hands of Dolcino. The most peculiar of the views held by the Apostolical Brethren, was, that they looked upon perfection as consisting in overcoming the severest temptation; each Apostolical "brother" had, therefore, a "sister," and, both being under the vow of celibacy, they lived together in the most perfect chastity. Some have thought it necessary to denounce this in no measured terms, others have given credit to the scandalous tales that have been told regarding these brotherly and sisterly unions. Be it remarked, however, that we find instances of similar things among the African Christians of the second century, and as to the scandalous tales—told in the one instance as much as the other—the probability is that there is as much of truth as of falsehood in them, in both cases. The "sister" of Dolcino was the beautiful Margarita, whose fate all must commiserate, while no one can refuse to admire her bravery.

The Church, at length, cast her eyes towards the peaceful Val de Sesia, where the followers of Dolcino had now congregated in many thousands; and, ere long, the thunders of the Vatican, made terrible by the arms of the Guelphic Barons, are directed against these unoffending people. Through a long and unrelenting war, the defence is conducted with consummate skill, by Dolcino, and the miseries thereof are borne with uncomplaining fortitude by his followers; nor were they without the satisfaction of having inflicted, by their forays and sallies, very considerable damage on the Papal troops, who, in fact, only achieved the conquest by dint of overpowering numbers. The end is, that the victory, dearly bought, places such of the Dolcinites as have not been starved or killed in the power of the Church. Not one would recant; they were all burnt: Dolcino and Margarita being reserved for a more public and terrible fate. Before the eyes of Dolcino, Margarita, whom he loved (whether with a guilty or holy love), was literally torn to pieces with red-hot pincers; she uttered not a groan the while. A like fate, less terrible than this prelude, was inflicted upon him.

But why call up the remembrance of these deeds of horror? some may say. Even as Waddington, in his History of the Church, passes over, with slight reference, her crimes against humanity, saying: "It would be a painful office, and of little profit, in the present prevalence of reason and humanity, to pursue the frightful details of religious massacre." Why then refer to these things? why give the details of Albigensian crusades, and heretical persecutions? Because it is well for men to know what Priestcraft is; and to remember that Priestcraft is Priestcraft still. Does it not still preach a God of blood and vengeance? Is not the God of the Jews, that blood-

thirsty Deity who ordered the sacrifice of whole hetacombs of human beings, who assisted in the slaughter of innocent women and children, and the history of whose chosen people, doing His behests, contains a catalogue of crimes against humanity unparalleled elsewhere in the history of the world—is not this still the God of Priestcraft? Are we not even now taught to read that history as something more holy and sacred than any other? Are not Genesis, Judges, and Joshua, still called from the pulpits of our land the Word of God? Yes! Priestcraft is Priestcraft still. It is true, that by the progress of reason and humanity its claws have been cut, its sting in some measure removed, its strength somewhat lessened, but it still aims at enslaving the minds and souls of men, its teaching still consecrates crime and immorality. Though no longer able to shoot down and murder its enemies, it still seeks to murder their reputation, to render them hateful to their fellows, and to strew as many thorns in their life-path as possible.

Let us never forget that Priestcraft was not destroyed by the success of the Reformation. The old Church is still a power in the world, a power for evil. The Church of the Reformation, too, by no means shook itself entirely clear of the evils of the old system; it inherited the spirit of persecution. It, too, has the mark of blood upon it; and though it rendered the world a mighty service in shaking the old tyranny, and acknowledging the claims of the individual reason, practically it has but too frequently repudiated its own theory. The God we preach, in whom we would have men believe, is not the God of the Priest. Not an Avenging Deity, but the Universal Father; not a God of Fear, but a God of Love, is He whom we, as Religious Reformers, would proclaim to men. That God is Love, is a Truth long since spoken, but not yet fully acknowledged among men; but one which we are called upon to spread—to work, and suffer for, if need be. It is this Truth which the Churches have for so many ages buried in a theological coffin; Priestcraft, for its own purposes, seeking the while to crush humanity beneath the weight of the thought that a God of Vengeance reigns above, whom only a dutiful submission to the Priest can appease.

The lesson of True Toleration is one which men have yet to learn in its fullness. The days of the fagot and the torture are past, it is true, but a subtler means of tyranny has been found, and the man of Freethought is still the object of the detestation of the reformed no less than of the old Church. Priests will say, even now, that they are intolerant of what they call Infidelity for the sake of the Truth. Let no man be deceived. The Truth needs not the support of Churches and Priests; it is (as was well said in olden times) mighty, and must prevail. It will do this without the aid of man; it will do this as by a law of God. We can speak with certainty on this point; it will do this, because it has done this. No portion of the Truth, once discovered by man, has ever been lost; hidden it may have been, buried for a time—opposed it has been on every hand by prejudice, selfishness, and bigotry, but ever it has reappeared and won its way in spite of all. All human endeavours to destroy it have ever proved futile. There is, in fact, no power in the universe that can destroy it. In the past triumphs of Truth, we see the prophecy and promise of its future and greater triumphs. These are certain, because God's great Law of Progress lies behind the Truth, to aid every effort to spread it, and secure its acceptance among men. It needs not, then, the support of Churches and Priests; and it defies their enmity. We repeat it, let no man be deceived; the intolerant are ever foes to the Truth. Those who would have it prevail, those who earnestly believe in its

power, will ever be tolerant; because they know that, with a fair field and no favour, Truth has nothing to fear from Error. In the intolerance of the Churches, whether of the past or the present, therefore, we find their condemnation; and in this lies the proof that they themselves have not now, nor ever had, any earnest belief that that which they have taught, and still teach, is, verily, the Truth.

It is as well, also, to look into this Past, not alone that we may know the true nature of Priestcraft, but that we may learn through what struggles the witnesses for truth were willing to pass, what difficulties they had to conquer in working out for us the possibilities of a higher and nobler progress in the Future—that we may learn, too, that the “present prevalence of reason and humanity,” has been achieved through long centuries of suffering inflicted by the Priest; and that, learning these things, we may remember that there are yet more victories to be won, that the truth has still to be battled and struggled for; and from seeing what has been done by those who have gone before, we may gather strength for the work we have to do. The truth, which those Fraticelli and Apostolicals of old fought and suffered for, may not be our truth, but it would be well if the spirit in which they suffered might be ours. In looking at these struggles of the Past, we would look beyond the mere doctrine of those who suffered. We detest the Church because her aim, in inflicting this suffering, was to establish a despotism and enslave humanity; while we honour the heretics, for that they fought and suffered for Freedom, and, by their action, opened a path for a nobler Freedom, not yet fully obtained—Freedom from Slavery to Ideas.

And was the heresy destroyed? Nay, not so; never was heresy destroyed by those means. If you would give a truth an immediate and lasting success, persecute it; if you would make even an error strong, persecute it. The Church took long to learn this lesson, and with her Dominicans sought to sweep away all who opposed her in her pride of power and spiritual despotism. But she was never weaker than when making these attempts. Already she had cleared Languedoc of heresy by fire and sword, but the work had to be done over again ere a hundred years had passed. It is somewhat strange that the Fraticelli abounded in the very region whence the Albigenses had been exterminated. Dolcino and his associates were but the first to suffer, and with them the bloody work of persecution was but begun. No less than 2000 persons were burnt by the Inquisition, in the course of a few years from that time, for their inflexible adherence to the rule of “holy poverty.” Nor did this suffice to destroy the sect, for Pope Nicholas V. again revived the persecution towards the end of the fourteenth century. But to extirpate it was beyond the might of the Church, for it subsisted in Germany down to the time of the Reformation, when it was absorbed by that movement.

Through all the countries of Europe the tendencies represented by the Fraticelli soon became widely disseminated, giving birth to Beghards, Brethren of the Common Lot, Beguines, Lollards, and various other societies characterised by their austere morals and anti-sacerdotal opinions. In fact, the Fraticelli were but one expression of the consciousness of the European mind of their time, becoming ever more and more distinct, that a Reformation was needed and must come. In the true Franciscans we, therefore, see forerunners of the Reformation; and amid all their vagaries and aberrations of thought and doctrine, should recognise that they had possession of at least one truth, namely, that the Church had become thoroughly corrupt. The

Mendicant Friars, whom the Church retained as her dutiful children, were, in fact, mendicants no longer, and remained but to add to the corruption within the Church. The Dominicans, on the one hand, standing guard over the dungeons, and lighting the fires of the Church for "heretics," that is, all who escaped the contagion of priestly vice and corruption. The Franciscans, on the other, in their laziness, luxury, and avarice, becoming an eyesore to every good man of the time; useful, however, as provoking opposition to the Church. We have seen that the Mendicants (so far, at least, as the Franciscans were concerned), in their earlier mission, met a want of their age. With Francis of Assisi, and the companions who joined him in his mission, at the first, Franciscanism was a fact, it was no sham to them; the earlier Franciscans were no hypocrites, they were men with a purpose. But, as the Order grew, fashion and popular applause, and sundry advantages of a more or less sordid character, drew men into its ranks—the idea upon which it was founded was no longer a truth to them, and that which was at first a principle, a real thing, became a sham. The usual results followed, as we have seen, and those who retained the spirit of the Founder, the true men amongst the Franciscans, revolted at the hypocrisy which retained the name without the spirit, which sought the advantages and eschewed the duties. The soul departed out of Franciscanism, even as it must do out of any theory of life which is founded on exceptional circumstances, or propounded by exceptional men. The only truth which Franciscanism contained, the democratic idea on which it was based, that remained to do its work in the world, and did it, nay, is still doing it; but the rest, the grey tunic and the cord, the mendicancy and the "holy poverty," became a mere form, covering hypocrisy and emptiness. In this, Franciscanism was but a type of Christianity—to Christ, and the early Christians, the theory of life propounded by him was a fact they lived; but, as the ages rolled, the theory ceased to be a fact, forms took its name, and other theories usurped its place. What was true in the earlier theory remained to do its work, and is still doing it; and had not Priestcraft intervened, would have done it long since. With the one it was as with the other,—the Franciscanism of Francis, degenerated into "sturdy begging," even as the Christianity of Christ degenerated into Priestcraft. The Mendicant Communities, with their strange Fraticelli and other outcomes, form a useful index to the spiritual aspects of their age, and what they were we shall show in our next.

JAS. L. GOODING.

THE PULPIT AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY.

THE Churches of our day afford much food for serious thought. They are really dead, in spite of the gigantic efforts which have been made to restore energy to their inert systems. "Revival narratives," now among the things of the past; and "Special Sermons," already added to the vast pile of theological rubbish which no one reads or dreams of reading; and "United Prayings," have exerted no greater life-restoring power than a galvanic-battery does upon a corpse: the limbs have been shaken, but they have not given proof of life; a noise has been made, but it arose only from the pressure of artificial forces—not from any real power within. The reflective man, given to analyzing things as they are, turns with disgust from the vulgar machinery of revival agitators, and asks why it is that, after ages of toil, of sacrifice, and of struggle, the Christianity of modern times should be thus far powerless

and lifeless. Can it be that the system is evil? Can it be that the ideas underlying the doctrines are untrue? Surely not! The teaching of the gentle Nazarene, uncontaminated by the wretched dogmas which have been added to it by priests, is thoroughly adapted to the moral wants of humanity. Why, then, have we so much weakness and mental death in the Churches? Why have we such a want of healthful vigour on the part of their most sincere advocates? or why have we revivals which, instead of giving, what the mass of men ask for, the essence of religious thought, only serve to rob the wretched devotees of their intellectual powers, and make them mere slaves of the "class-leader" or the minister? These are questions which every reflective man who is not harnessed to a system is asking; and, moreover, they are questions which must be answered. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that real religion is not growing in the hearts of the people in the same ratio as the increase of population; or if we try to blot out the reflection, it will, like a cancer in the flesh whose warnings we stifle, eat its way into the heart of English life and destroy its vitality. Many and varied causes have been at work to produce the evils connected with the Churches, but we believe the worst and most numerous may be traced to pulpit influences.

Much of the lifelessness of the Christian Churches may be traced to the pulpit, and although the minister seeks to shelter himself by throwing the blame on his people, we are convinced that in the majority of cases much of the sin lies at his door. We have in the Churches men who are no more fitted to lead the people than a dustman would be to lecture on science. There is a vast dearth of talent in the pulpit—here and there a great preacher appears, and men rush after him as a wonder—so strange does it seem to hear anything noble and true from a "Man of God." Sometimes, too, a clever talker, possessed of more language and impudence than real thought, draws his thousands, and attracts attention in the newspapers. But these are exceptions. The rule is flat insipidity, or downright folly and ignorance. It is not difficult to trace the cause of this. The practice, which finds favour among Dissenters, of selecting talkative young men (who make themselves conspicuous by speaking on subjects they do not understand) to train for the ministerial office, is one of the chief curses of modern religious teaching. A youth has a talent for talking, folly or wisdom it matters not, provided he be orthodox; he preaches at the corners of the streets, exhorting all to be "saved," and after a little practice can very glibly string together a number of sentences respecting "grace" and "redemption." He is, ere long, noticed by the deacons; Mr. Drawl, who is conspicuous for nothing but his remarkable power of asperating H's which should not be sounded, but who is, notwithstanding, considered a very clever man and "powerful in prayer," takes the youth in hand, and explains at the next Church Meeting that he is a "dear, good young man," who would make a "saving worker in the vine-yard," and ought to be a minister. Our youth is examined, not as regards his knowledge of man or of the world, or with reference to his insight into the workings of the human mind, but in his faith, *i.e.*, his power of repeating by rote certain set phrases. He preaches his trial sermon, and is approved by the sages who sit in judgment upon him; and now he is sent to study to be a teacher of the people, a fisher of men—has to prepare for what should be considered the most important of all human occupations. What training does he go through? Is it a discipline that will enable him to think independently—to stand out, if need be, as the unsided champion of truth—to become the philosophical leader of his sheep? Nothing of the kind! He

learns to manufacture sermons to pattern or plan, to measure out God by the theologian's rule, and to look at humanity through the coloured glasses of his sect. Two years of this training are considered sufficient to enable him to take his place among his brethren, and he goes forth with a very superficial knowledge of things, most frequently with false ideas of the dispositions and longings of men, and pretends to be a teacher. Thinking himself a very Paul, he now stands on the Mar's Hill of his little chapel, and cries aloud to all to repent; but, alas! few respond to his call. Still he labours on, preaching much on eternal torments and the power of the devil, and tries, not to make men free and strong, not to instil into minds open to receive truth noble and pure ideas of God and human duty, but to make all the bond-slaves of a system—the blind followers of a mere word-creed. Thus, he does not make men nobler or purer by his preaching, nor does he ennoble himself, but in a short time adds one to the long list of the class we shall take the liberty of calling ministerial hacks. Congregations easily become a reflex of the minister who controls them, and hence, while these pretenders to philosophy are in the ascendant, we have on the part of the people, an amount of dulness and stupidity that is really frightful. They have no real knowledge of religion; they can talk of "election," of "sanctification," and of "grace," of "weak brothers and sisters," and "strong brothers and sisters," but of the religious life that Paul lived, of the religious thought that Christ expounded, they know nothing. They will pray, too, for the "unconverted," and will string together words which have no meaning—prayers in which phrases learned by rote from the preacher hold a conspicuous part. If they have an intellectual man among them, who stands head and shoulders above them, they are ready enough to cry that his lofty head may be bowed low, for they hold in practice that intellect and God are wholly in opposition. The man of genius is a man of "gilded gingerbread;" and the writer and thinker who labours to spread knowledge abroad, and elevate men in the social and moral scale, is "a dealer in the vanities of the world," who will one day discover his error, or find himself in Hell.

This is no imaginary picture, but a type of the vast mass of "saved Christians," who have effectually chased out the spirit of Christ's teaching by the "fetish" worship and "wordmongering" they have introduced in its stead.

When preachers talk about the amount of scepticism among young men, they should think of the facts we have glanced at. It is true that many intellectual men of these days are sceptical, but to whom is it to be attributed? Shall we say, as some shallow minds assert, that it is the result of depravity of heart? or shall we not rather say that it results from the fact that there is little in modern preaching to satisfy the cravings of the intellect? Where a really great preacher makes his appearance they crowd to hear him; they are the followers of the real thinker, and are willing to listen if they hear aught worth remembering. But the great preachers, the men who do minister to the moral and intellectual wants of the age, are few and far between; and we look out anxiously towards the horizon of time for signs of the coming great man who shall touch the dry bones of the valley and inspire them with life, and shall replace the late physical demonstrations of Ireland and Scotland with a noble revival—a revival that will speak to the heart and intellect, and afford something like religious life to the men who pant for it, and find it not.

J. G.

WITCHCRAFT AND ITS OVERTHROW.

THE beliefs regarding witches, of which we gave a summary last week, were varied in some respects in several countries, but the main points were the same in France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, and the far North of Europe; and because of having attended the meetings, hundreds and thousands of accused persons were put to death. The charge once preferred, they had no chance of escape, for all the subtlety of reasoning was employed to controvert the evidence they gave to establish their innocence.

This cruelty and gross perversion of all law, right, and common sense, could not go on for ever. If it continued there was but one result, and that involved the return of the European nations to savagery. Such a course was prepared by the Church, and had it not been for the few, the glorious few, the clergy would have triumphed, and the nations had been ruined. What that little band had to endure is not now to be spoken of, for it cannot be conceived or duly estimated. Reginald Scot was the first Englishman who undertook to come to close quarters with this demon doctrine, and, as it has been scoffingly said, he was "neither a clergyman nor college bred." The charge is well founded, for he was a self-educated man; but, as Anthony Wood confesses, he was one who read solid books, and who honestly formed his opinion from the evidence he had collected. He repudiated the whole theory, and his work * contains many powerful and unanswerable arguments against it. When King James wrote his work upon Demonology, he called attention to "one called Scot, an Englishman, who is not ashamed in public "print to deny that there can be any such thing as witchcraft, and so maintains the old error of the Sadducees in denying of spirits." The latter imputation was utterly false, for Scot believed in a spiritual existence as earnestly as any man of his age believed it; but the habit of lying was so inveterate in James that he could not avoid making a point by such means. When he became King of England one of "his earliest proofs of wisdom," after succeeding to the English throne, was manifested in commanding that the work of Reginald Scot should be publicly burnt, and all the copies which could be got together were consumed. It was a source of great grief to this drunken monarch that he could not burn the author with the book, but happily the course of nature had put that out of his power; he destroyed what he could not answer, and his seeming victory has covered him with everlasting shame.

Scot had made himself many enemies, who cried out infidel as he passed by them, and in this he shared the fate of every man who has done anything towards removing the fearful weight of ignorance and superstition from the minds of the people. All who led studious lives, all who endeavoured to discover the secret workings of nature, all who were labouring to make humanity stronger and freer, had to bear the same burden. Not a man can be named who toiled for the good of mankind during the time of the intellectual dawn that escaped this charge. The clergy were too ignorant to comprehend what the men had to teach, and accounted all that was beyond their reach as devilish. Had Layard made his Ninevite discoveries during that period, he would have suffered at the stake, as a man possessed by a devil, who had created all the carved stones in order to delude mankind. The facts would not have been listened to. They who had the best evidence to prove their innocence were the worst off, for, as it was triumphantly argued, "if

* Discoverie of Witchcraft, 1584.

"they were in league with the devil, it was only natural to believe he would do his best to save his children."

But when the hour of the end came, and the fires were no longer lit, there was great mourning over the degeneracy of the times. When the Parliament of England repealed the laws against Witchcraft, so far as they involved capital punishment, the Presbytery of Scotland was highly indignant, and officially denounced the wickedness of that proceeding. So late as the year 1785, says Arnot, it was the custom among the Seceders to read from the pulpit an annual confession of sins, national and personal, among which was mentioned the "Repeal by Parliament of the penal statute against witchcraft, contrary to the express laws of God."† This was merely saying in public what others said in private, for there was a pretty general conviction abroad that the Divine displeasure would descend upon us, as a nation, because of turning from the true path in ceasing to burn witches. Thousands complained of the rationalising spirit of the age, which operated so fatally against the spread of godliness. A bitter writer has argued that the sorrow exhibited was because the stake was no longer employed; but he mistakes the feeling. Probably it is nearer the truth to say, that as citizens and men of feeling, Englishmen rejoiced at the cessation of the butcheries; but at the same time, as members of a religious community, they were technically and formally sorry. Their pastors had not consented to the abolition of the horrible trials and executions, and hence the protests and vapouring. Neither did the said pastors see how they were to give up witchcraft without surrendering the "Holy Scriptures," and, believing the latter, they concluded from them in favour of the former. They were at least honest men, for it is unquestionable that he who believes the Old and New Testaments, believes also in witchcraft, or he contradicts himself.

We have, in this matter, a flagrant instance of the way in which the theories of theologians create a sort of mental Jesuitism among our people, causing them to play fast and loose with their perceptions of the truth, and setting their moral consciousness in a state of conflict with their religious beliefs. Men hold to the Biblical Witchcraft, while they deny the truth of the Witch theory as representing a fact of Nature. They believe, and yet disbelieve; assert, and yet deny. Science compels the denial, while the Bible enforces the belief. And thus a state of mind is induced, which if it were not sad, would be excessively ludicrous. But though, as a matter of faith, and because of allowing themselves to be creed-ridden, many accept the Witch of Endor story, there are none, or but few, who would wish to see the old system restored; as a matter of faith they consent to the theory, but are, nevertheless, glad that it is no longer a reality. It is with this even as with the penalties formerly enforced against Atheists, and the legal disabilities which attached to what the Churches styled "infidelity;" there are thousands who, as Church-members, still deny a man's right to reason on religious subjects, who yet are glad that these penalties and disabilities are falling into desuetude. It is but few who would wish to see restored the days of prosecution for religious heterodoxy. Thus, the moral sense of humanity vindicates itself in spite of the Priest; and the promise of a better day is given in defiance of Church systems and theological theories.

P. W. P.

† Criminal Trials in Scotland.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE "SONG OF SOLOMON."

(Continued from page 288.)

HAVING indicated the course which theological writers have pursued, when treating of the Song of Songs, I shall now proceed to read it to you from the excellent translation furnished by Christian D. Ginsburg, unto whom I have been so largely indebted for the matter already laid before you. He treats it as a fine old poem, or rather, as a sort of chaunted drama. His first section comprises what are known as Chapter one, and the seven opening verses of the second Chapter. The remainder of the Poem occupies four more sections. The matter treated, is summarised at the head of each section.

SECTION I.

CHAPTERS I.—II. 7.

The scene of this division is in the royal tent of Solomon. The Shulamite, separated from her beloved shepherd, longs to be reunited with him whom she prizes above all things (2, 3). She implores him to come and rescue her; for, though brought by the king into his royal tent, her love continues the same (4). She repels the scornful reflection of the court ladies when they hear her soliloquy (5, 6). She implores her lover to tell her where she may find him (7). The court ladies ironically answer this request (8). Meanwhile the king comes in, and tries to win her affections by flatteries and promises (9—11). This attempt fails, and she opposes to the king's love her unabated attachment to her beloved shepherd (12—ii. 6). In an ecstasy she adjures the court ladies not to attempt to persuade her to love any one else (7).

- The Shulamite.* 2 Oh for a kiss of the kisses of his mouth!
For sweet are thy caresses above wine.
3 Sweet is the odour of thy perfumes,
Which perfume thou art, by thy name diffused abroad,
Therefore do the damsels love thee.
4 Oh draw me after thee! Oh let us flee together!
The king has brought me into his apartments,
But we exult and rejoice in thee,
We praise thy love more than wine,
The upright love thee.
5 I am swarthy, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
As the tents of Kedar,
But comely as the pavilions of Solomon.
6 Disdain me not because I am dark,
For the sun hath browned me,
My mother's sons were severe with me,
They made me keeper of their vineyards,
Though my own vineyard I never kept.—
7 Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth,
Where thou feedest thy flock,
Where thou causest it to lie down at noon,
Lest I should be roaming
Among the flocks of thy companions.

Daughters of Jerusalem.

- 8 If thou knowest not, O fairest among women,
Go in the footsteps of the flocks,
And feed thy kids
By the tents of the shepherds.

- Salomon.* 9 To my steed in the chariot of Pharaoh
Do I compare thee, O my love.
10 Beautiful is thy countenance in the circlet,
Thy neck in the necklace!
11 A golden circlet will we make thee,
With studs of silver.
- The Shulamite.* 12 While the king is at his table
My nard shall diffuse its fragrance.
13 A bag of myrrh resting in my bosom
Is my beloved unto me.
14 A bunch of cypress flowers from the garden of En-gedi
Is my beloved unto me.
- The Shepherd.* 15 Behold, thou art beautiful, my love ;
Behold, thou art beautiful,
Thine eyes are doves.
- The Shulamite.* 16 Behold, thou art comely, my beloved,
Yea thou art lovely ;
Yea, verdant is our couch ;
17 Our bower is of cedar arches,
Our retreat of cypress roof :
- CHAP. II. 1 I am a mere flower of the plain,
A lily of the valley.
- The Shepherd.* 2 As a lily among the thorns,
So is my loved one among the damsels
- The Shulamite.* 3 As an apple-tree among the wild trees,
So is my beloved among the youths.
I delight to sit beneath its shade,
For delicious is its fruit to my taste.
4 He led me into that bower of delight,
And overshadowed me with love.
5 Oh, strengthen me with grape cakes,
Refresh me with apples,
For I am sick with love !
6 Let his left hand be under my head,
And his right hand support me !
7 I adjure you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles, or the hinds of the field,
Neither to excite nor to incite my affection
Till it wishes another love.

SECTION II.

CHAPTER II. 8—III. 5.

Here we have a second scene, which is also in the royal tent. The speakers are the Shulamite and the court ladies. The Shulamite, to account for the cause of the severity of her brothers, mentioned in i. 6, relates that her beloved shepherd came one charming morning in the spring to invite her to the fields (8—14); that her brothers, in order to prevent her from going, gave her employment in the gardens (15); that she consoled herself with the assurance that her beloved, though separated from her at that time, would come again in the evening (16, 17); that seeing he did not come, she, under difficult circumstances, ventured to seek him, and found him (ch. iii. 1—4). Having narrated these events, and reiterated her ardent affection for her beloved, she concludes as before, by adjuring the court ladies not to persuade her to change her love.

- The Shulamite.* 8 Hark! my beloved!
 Lo, he came
 Leaping over the mountains,
 Bounding over the hills.
 9 My beloved was like a gazelle,
 Or the young one of a hind.
 Lo! there he stood behind our wall,
 He looked through the window,
 He glanced through the lattice.
 10 My beloved spake, he spake to me,
 "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come!
 11 For lo, the winter is past,
 The rain is over, is gone.
 12 The flowers appear upon the fields,
 The time of singing is come,
 The cooing of the turtle-dove is heard in our land,
 13 The fig-tree sweetens her green figs,
 The vines blossom,
 They diffuse fragrance;
 Arise, my love, my fair one, and come!
 14 My dove in the clefts of the rock,
 In the hiding-place of the cliff,
 Let me see thy countenance,
 Let me hear thy voice,
 For sweet is thy voice,
 And thy countenance lovely."

The Brothers of the Shulamite.

- 15 Catch us the foxes, the little foxes
 Which destroy the vineyards,
 For our vineyards are in bloom.

- The Shulamite.* 16 My beloved is mine, and I am his,
 His who feeds his flock among the lilies.
 17 When the day cools,
 And the shadows flee away,
 Return, haste, O my beloved,
 Like the gazelle or the young one of the hind,
 Over the mountains of separation.

- CHAP. III. 1 When on my nightly couch,
 I still sought him whom my soul loveth;
 I sought him, but found him not.
 2 I must arise now and go about the city,
 In the streets and in the squares;
 I must seek him whom my soul loveth:
 I sought him, but found him not.
 3 The watchmen who patrol the city found me:
 "Have you seen him whom my soul loveth?"
 4 Scarcely had I passed them,
 When I found him whom my soul loveth;
 I seized him, and would not let him go
 Till I brought him to the house of my mother,
 Into the apartment of her who gave me birth.
 5 I adjure you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
 By the gazelles or the hinds of the field,
 Neither to excite nor to incite my affection
 Till it wishes another love.

SECTION III.

CHAPTERS III. 6.—V. 1.

The royal tent in the country is broken up, and the royal train comes up to Jerusalem. Some of the inhabitants of the capital, as they beheld it at a distance, hold a dialogue respecting it (6—11). The shepherd, coming up to rescue his loved one, obtains an interview with her, and expresses his delight in her charms (ch. iv. 1—5). The Shulamite moved, modestly interrupts his description, and tells him that she is ready to escape with him that very evening (6). He immediately proffers his assistance, declaring that her charms had inspired him with courage sufficient for the occasion (7—9); he describes her charms (10, 11) and her faithfulness (12—16). The Shulamite declares that all she possesses shall be his (16). Some of the court ladies sympathize with them (ch. v. 1).

One of the Inhabitants of Jerusalem.

6 What is that coming up from the country,
As in columns of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh, with frankincense,
And all sorts of aromatics from the merchants?

Another.

7 Lo! it is the palanquin of Solomon,
Around it are threescore valiant men
From the valiant of Israel:
8 All skilled in the sword, expert in war,
Each with his sword girded on his thigh
Against the nightly marauders.

A Third.

9 A palanquin hath king Solomon made for himself,
Of the wood of Lebanon.
10 Its pillars he hath made of silver,
Its support of gold, its seat of purple,
Its interior tessellated most lovely
By the daughters of Jerusalem.

A Fourth.

11 Come out, ye daughters of Zion,
And behold King Solomon;
The crown with which his mother crowned him
On the day of his espousals,
On the day of his gladness of heart.

The Shepherd (advancing to the Shulamite.)

CHAP. IV.

1 Behold, thou art beautiful, my loved one,
Behold, thou art beautiful!
Thine eyes are doves behind thy veil;
Thy hair is like a flock of goats,
Springing down Mount Gilead.
2 Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep
Which come up from the washing pool,
All of which are paired,
And not one among them is bereaved.
3 Like a braid of scarlet are thy lips,
And thy mouth is lovely:
Like a part of the pomegranate
Are thy cheeks behind thy veil:
4 Thy neck is like the tower of David,
Reared for the builder's model:
A thousand shields are hung upon it,
All sorts of bucklers of the mighty.
5 Thy bosom like two young fawns,
Twins of a gazelle, feeding among lilies.

The Shulamite. 6 When the day cools
And the shadows flee away,
I will go to the mount of myrrh,
To the hill of frankincense.

The Shepherd. 7 Thou art all beautiful, my loved one,
And there is no blemish in thee.
8 With me, with me, my betrothed,
Thou shalt go from Lebanon;
Thou shalt go from the heights of Amana,
From the summit of Shenir and Hermon,
From the habitations of lions,
From the mountains of panthers.
9 Thou hast emboldened me,
My sister, my betrothed,
Thou hast emboldened me,
With one of thine eyes,
With one of the chains of thy neck.
10 How sweet is thy love, O my sister, my betrothed!
How sweet is thy love above wine!
And the fragrance of thy perfumes above all the spices!
11 Thy lips, O my betrothed, distil honey:
Honey and milk are under thy tongue,
And the odour of thy garments is as the smell of Lebanon.
12 A closed garden art thou, my sister, my betrothed,
A closed garden, a sealed fountain.
13 Thy shoots like a garden of pomegranates,
With precious fruits,
Cypresses and nards,
14 Nard and crocus,
Calamus and cinnamon,
With all sorts of frankincense trees,
Myrrh and aloes;
15 With all kinds of excellent aromatics,
With a garden fountain,
A well of living waters,
And streams flowing from Lebanon.
16 Arise, O north wind! and come, thou south!
Blow upon my garden,
That its perfumes may flow out!

The Shulamite. Let my beloved come into his garden
And eat its delicious fruits!

The Shepherd.

CHAP. V. 1 I am coming into my garden, my sister, my betrothed:
I am gathering my myrrh with my spices,
I am eating my honeycomb with my honey,
I am drinking my wine with my milk.

Some of the Daughters of Jerusalem.

Eat, O friends!
Drink, and drink abundantly, O beloved!

(To be continued.)

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THE "GOOD TIDINGS" OF A ROYAL MARRIAGE.

THIS British nation, through its Representatives, has been graciously informed that Her Majesty has concluded an arrangement for the marriage of the Princess Alice with His Grand Ducal Highness Prince Louis of Hesse, and that, judging from past favours, she doubted not the House would make such a provision for the marriage as would be suitable to the dignity of the Crown. The sum asked for, and so speedily granted, was a dowry of £30,000, and a life allowance of £6,000 a-year, which sum, honourable gentlemen have spoken of as "rather small;" though doubtless the Prince of Hesse will be content. If not, then there are plenty of true German princes who will be happy to take the bride off his hands, with even half the allowance, for, with £3000 a-year, they would consider themselves to be the richest and luckiest dogs in existence.

The House granted the money with great joy and readiness; for the "Opposition," according to its custom in such cases, came forward to second the proposal. By acting in this way it is proposed to render the transaction palatable to John Bull, who is called upon to rejoice over the fact that he can afford to supply brides with dowries for half the Courts of Europe. But now that the imaginary burst of joy with which the proposition was received has somewhat subsided, we feel disposed to question the legality of the transaction. Why should the people of England be taxed for such purposes? Why should Queen Victoria be relieved from the necessity of providing for her own children?

By general consent she is hailed as a good woman, and we cordially join with those who say this; but when it is said that she is as good a Queen as Woman, we are compelled to ask, "What constitutes a Good Queen?" The only queenly qualification she has displayed lies in this, that Her Majesty does not trouble herself with the political affairs of State. She is wisely content to leave all in the hands of her Ministers, and as to their appointment she is equally unselfish; for, when the House of Commons is tired of one party, she condescends to appoint those who led in the battle when the old ones were defeated. It is an admirable arrangement, which cannot fail to satisfy a people who are jealous of Royal Authority. Still we are at a loss to perceive in what the special goodness of the "Queen" consists. If it be in

doing nothing, then, undoubtedly, we could employ millions who would "do" it as well for much less money. There are thousands of women in England who are in every sense as good as Victoria—who, as wives and mothers, are not a whit behind her in any of the qualities for which she is praised; and if they could show their greatness as Queens by doing nothing more than to receive the pay, we doubt not they would give us every satisfaction. But as the change would do no good we do not recommend it. All we desire to urge is, that Her Majesty shall take the responsibility of her family the same as all her servants do. Taken together, Her Majesty and Prince Albert receive about £1000 per day, a sum which, for abstaining from doing anything, is rather large, and sufficient to meet all wants. Why, then, should the nation be taxed for dowry and annual marriage portions? Why not give marriage portions to the daughters of the Prime Ministers or the Admirals? They serve the State in various ways, and if our gratitude be due to any, then it is those who should receive our gifts. Carry the principle fairly out, and it will follow that Lord Palmerston will rise in the House to express the great pleasure he has in announcing that Dobson, the Treasury Messenger, has concluded an arrangement for the marriage of his daughter "Tilda" with Long George, of Nine Pin Court, the Prince of Smokers, and that he has no doubt the Members will make such provision as will maintain the dignity of an officer employed by the State. Why should any objection be raised to overthrow his hopes and the prospects of his "Tilda"? He is employed, and, moreover, is compelled to work hard for his wages; and if it be urged that he is paid for what he does, he can answer, with truth, that Victoria also is paid, so that being both servants of the State they stand upon equal ground.

Dobson would take nothing by his movement, and simply because it is not the custom of Parliament to furnish dowries to Messengers' daughters, while Victoria succeeds because it is the custom to give them to the daughters of Royalty. The sooner it is broken the better, for it is nothing short of a cruel injustice to add so much to the taxation of this overladen people. If the Prince of Hesse could not take a wife without such a fortune, then it was the duty of her parents to have made a proper provision for her out of their immense income and great savings. They are capable of doing so without involving themselves in difficulties, and it would be far more creditable for them to act thus than it is to send down to the House for such supplies. The times are hard to millions; and now that so many labourers and mechanics, with plodding tradesmen, are compelled to deny themselves many little comforts, because of the heavy taxation under which they are oppressed, it is as much the duty of Royalty to forbear from asking more, as it is of the people to make the most of the small means now left to their disposal. Justice should not be compelled to bow to etiquette; neither should the Representatives of the People be so hasty in granting away the means which their Constituents require for their own purposes.

Some of our contemporaries have spoken of the "honour" we are gaining through becoming "connected by marriage" with the Russian Court; but surely in this they were poking fun at honest John. The English nation has gained nothing by such alliances beyond the chance of being called upon to spend both blood and money in defending the worthless. It may not prove so in this case, yet we fear that the daughters of England are sought, not for personal love, but in the hope of their proving profitable speculations.

P. W. P.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XX.

FANATICISM, SUPERSTITION, AND SPIRITUAL BEGGARY.

WE have now rapidly travelled over the history of the Mendicant Monks; it was necessary so to do, in order that we might understand the age in which they flourished, being, as it was, an epoch in the history of the Reformation, of the Church, and of European Civilisation. A century which produced a Francis of Assissi, a Sagarelli, a Dolcino, in which so strange a theory as that upon which the Mendicant Orders were based could find such wide acceptance, and presenting the many other strange characteristics we have noticed, must have been exceptional and extraordinary. We feel, therefore, that it is necessary to find, if we can, the key by which to unfold its mystery, and explain these characteristics. In order to do this, we must look a little further at the phenomena of the time.

It is noticeable, that this was the age in which the worship of the Virgin Mary became the mark of the religious devotee—it was, in fact, the passion of the time. The Dominicans were under her especial patronage, and the legends told of her interviews with Dominic and Francis were of a character too disgusting to render their repetition possible in these days. Woman, indeed, played a distinguished part in the entire religious history of this period. This was the age of St. Clare, St. Bridget, St. Catherine of Sienna, and St. Elizabeth of Hungary. It is recorded in the Book of the Conformities of St. Francis, that at the time of the establishment of the second Order of St. Francis, that of the Minorite Nuns, or Clarisses, “many daughters of dukes, counts, barons, and other nobles of Germany, deserting the world, after the example of the blessed Clara and Agnes, were united to a heavenly bridegroom.” Agnes of Bohemia was the means of its establishment in Germany. Many of the heretics, too, of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were women. The Beguines of Liege, and other societies of women, bound by vows of poverty and chastity, took their rise at this time. It was probably from among them that certain female heretics arose, and about the year 1310 commenced preaching in Germany the doctrine “that the soul, annihilated in the love of the Creator, may leave the body to do as it pleases.” About the same time, also, an Englishwoman visited France, teaching “that the Holy Ghost had become incarnate in her, for the redemption of women.” Was all this religion, or was it sensuality? A question difficult to answer. But that there was sensuality in these strange superstitions, which formed so large a part of the religion of this epoch, there cannot be a doubt. Apart from that, however, these things are to be noted as one side of the religious phenomena of that time; even as Johanna Southcotes, and Irvingites, and others belong to those of this age. Perhaps, by comparing present circumstances with past, we may unriddle the mystery.

We turn to another side of the religious phenomena of those centuries. It was about the middle of this thirteenth century that the sect of the Flagellants first made their appearance in Italy. The authorities, temporal and spiritual, sought to extinguish this strange sect, but about the year 1340 they re-appear on the scene of history, in the shape of a multitude of above 10,000 persons, who issued from the towns and villages of Italy, with “whips, whose lashes are pointed with iron, and naked from the loins upwards, their bodies marked with red crosses.” This strange body soon separated into smaller companies, and spread themselves over Europe, living by mendicancy,

and plying their strange ceremonies on their way. Their manner of proceeding was this: starting out in the early morning they commenced their march, singing a monotonous strain, of which Dr. Lingard has given a free translation, as follows:—

“Through love of man the Saviour came,
Through love of man he died;
He suffered want, reproach, and shame;
Was scourged and crucified.
Oh! think then on thy Saviour’s pain,
And lash, thee sinner, lash again.”

Then the scourging would commence. Ranging themselves in two lines, on either side of the street, all but the last of each line would throw themselves on their faces, still singing; then would those left standing give a lash on the naked shoulders of each of the line as he passed, he himself lying down as soon as he reached the end. Each one rose after receiving the lash, and followed after, doing the like. So they passed on for hours together, lashing and being lashed in succession, the blood flowing from their wounds. Sometimes, even in the night, amid the glare of torches, they would carry on this work. Three-and-thirty days and a half each Flagellant thought it necessary to undergo this penance; but in spite of the constant departures, their numbers never decreased, but continually increased. During ten years this extraordinary epidemic fanaticism continued. The only country not affected by it throughout Europe was England. Was this religion or sheer madness? As difficult a question to answer as the other that we asked. Let us not forget, however, that revivals in modern days have presented religious madness equally great; not many months ago in Ireland, for instance.

We go a little further, and we find other aspects of the age equally remarkable. It was a time in which superstition put on its darkest and most terrible form. Crime assumed new and unexampled shapes. The historic atmosphere seems charged with signs and portents, and the light is lurid by which we read its events. Secret poisoning, dark and mysterious murders, astrology, sorcery, and magic, all betoken a diseased and terrible imagination, which made terror, in its various forms, to rule the popular mind of the time. This, too, was the age in which the Templars fell, victims not more of the cupidity and tyranny of King Philip than of the popular horror created by their supposed crimes. One of the most terrible facts in history, if we consider the “worse than Dantean hell of horrors” by which it was surrounded. This, also, was the age of Alchemy; the age, too, in which men believed that the Jews crucified little children and drank their blood. It was the age which created the story of a conspiracy between the lepers and the Jews the terrible details of which form a fit counterpart to the process against the Templars. The report was spread abroad that the Jews and lepers had poisoned the springs, and the composition attributed to the drugs with which this was done, shews the horrible imaginings of this time, in which men’s minds had become a very charnel-house of horrors. It was said that human blood and urine were mixed with the body of Christ (i.e. the Host), dried and pounded, to form the fearful poison. Men were found to declare that they had seen the mixture, and that lepers and Jews had confessed to making it. Leper-houses, those merciful institutions of St. Francis, and one outcome of the spirit of self-sacrifice he inculcated, were now viewed with suspicion and hatred; and the Church excommunicated the lepers. Many of these wretched outcasts were burnt, and thousands driven out into the wilds to

live as they might; while wholesale burnings of the Jews took place. This, moreover, was the age in which the belief in Witchcraft reached its height, and thousands of witches fell a sacrifice to popular hatred and superstition. Foul diseased imaginings took possession of men, life was surrounded with horror, earth became a hell. "The suspicious spirit of the time," says Michelet, "was startled at all mystery, like a child who is frightened by night, and who strikes all the harder at whatever meets his hands." There was discord everywhere, maledictions and curses were the blessings of the period, everyone mistrusted, and everyone was mistrusted. In short, it was a time in which man had lost man's nature; and evil passions, phrenzy, and madness, were let loose and dark, boding superstition ruled over all. Truly we cannot, thank God! parallel that time in these its aspects, but we should remember that with its Mormonisms, its spirit-rappings, and other phenomena of the kind, this age presents some points of contact with that even in these respects.

We have drawn attention to several points of comparison between the Age of the Mendicant Monks, the age which saw the publication of the Everlasting Gospel, and produced the other strange phenomena we have just been looking at, and the present age, because we think that in the similarity which exists we may find the explanation we are seeking. That age, like the present, was an Age of Transition, an Age of Doubt. The foundations of the old Faith had fallen away. The Church no longer supplied the spiritual necessities of the people. Now, if there be one thing more certain than another in the teachings of history, it is that humanity cannot remain in such a state. The soul of man stands in the same need of spiritual aliment as the body does of food. If it cannot find a wholesome diet it will prey on garbage. Doubt, negation, scepticism, atheism, are simply conditions impossible to mankind at large. If true Religion be wanting, superstition will supply its place. The spirit of liberty created by the Crusaders and the spread of commerce, the wider spread of intelligence, the philosophy of Aristotle, the contest of reason and authority occasioned by the spread of the scholastic philosophy, had all undermined the ancient foundations on which the Church of the Middle Ages rested. The Church had sought to compel belief by a spiritual terrorism on the one hand, and to woo adherence by cultivating a fanatical mysticism on the other. The results were what we have seen.

We say there is much in the circumstances of the present time like unto those of that age. It is true our higher civilization, our wider knowledge, our science, and, above all, our liberty of thought, prevent the same extent of fanaticism and extravagance now as then. But if it be asked why the Dr. Cummings and the Spurgeons of to-day find so many followers, why spirit-rappings and Irish Revivals, are existent amongst us, we answer it is because there is a wide-spread feeling that the old creeds and theologies are false, because people are no longer satisfied with the spiritual food administered to them by the appointed pastors and masters. As a consequence, Superstition has taken the place in many minds which Religion should supply. And there are not wanting men amongst us who, like the Mendicants of old, with far less excuse than they, undertake to do the dirty work of the Churches, to prop up the old theologies, and lead the people astray. We say with less excuse, because there is reason to believe the Mendicants were, to a great extent, self-deceived; but these are conscious charlatans.

Those Mendicants of old represented an Age of Spiritual Beggary.

Religion had taken to attitudinising, to dressing itself in grey tunics and black copes, to simulating humility and self-sacrifice, and had got to disbelieve in its own reality. We can believe in the earnestness of a Francis of Assissi; but in the Mendicant of Wycliffe's time, the mere actor of a part, the beggar who lived better than a lord, in him we cannot believe. Something real, something earnest, something that was not a sham, needed to be substituted for him. And is not this, too, an age of spiritual beggary? What earnestness is there in our Churches and Chapels? People go to them, not as believing what is taught there, but because it is fashionable, because it is respectable, because it brings custom to their shop—for any reason but because they are religious. This is ever the case when the religious ideas taught in the pulpit are behind the age; when the religious form no longer covers a fact.

To the thinking man there is nothing sadder than this; in an age which might be rich in spiritual blessings, in which the secrets of God's Universe are yielding themselves up at the bidding of Science for the instruction and improvement of men, our spiritual pastors offer us, in lieu of the grand Revelation God has given, and is daily giving us, of Himself, some miserable Jewish tradition or theological absurdity. With a glorious Past behind us, and a more glorious Future possible to us, with a Present full of life and struggles, hopes and aspirations, those who call themselves religious teachers altogether ignore, or are ignorant of history, nature, and man. The superstitions and follies of men dead fifteen hundred years ago are no fit pabulum wherewith to feed the souls of men in this nineteenth century; nor can the God of a barbarous age fit the conceptions of men enlightened by Science and the accumulated wisdom of the centuries. We starve in the midst of plenty, we are beggars where we might be owners of priceless blessings. We hear much from some people of the spiritual destitution of the times; and there is need of the complaint, only not in the sense they mean. We are spiritually destitute, and shall be so until our Teachers learn their Duty; or, rather, until we ourselves declare that these who arrogate the position of Teachers shall hold that position no longer, until we require that the pulpits of the land shall hold men who teach truth and not falsehood, who will not shut their eyes to the facts of history and science, but who will look out into the Universe around and shew men the God who is there, and teach them how to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

JAS. L. GOODING.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 7.—SAKYA AND HIS SERMON STYLE.

SAKYA frequently discoursed with the crowds of people who gathered together desiring to hear him. They appear to have been very anxious in most places to hear all he had got to say, nor was he unwilling to speak; and of these speeches many have been preserved. A great man once asked him how he could keep himself out of evil, and the following passage contains the answer:—

"Know thou, that to keep from the company of the ignorant, and choose that of learned men: to give honour to whom it is due; to choose a residence proper to our station, and adapted for procuring the common wants of life;

and to maintain a prudent carriage,—are means of preserving a man from evil doings. The comprehension of all things that are not evil, the exact knowledge of the duties of our station, and the observance of modesty and piety in our speech, are four excellent modes of renouncing wickedness.

“By ministering a proper support to parents, wife, and family; by purity and honesty in every action; by alms-deeds; by observing the Divine precepts; and by succouring relations,—we may be preserved from evil. By such a freedom from faults, that not even the inferior part of our nature manifests any affection for them; by abstinence from all intoxicating drink; by the continual practice of works of piety; by showing respectfulness, humility, and sobriety before all; and gratitude to our benefactors; and finally, by listening often to the preaching of the word of God,—we overcome evil inclinations, and keep ourselves far from sin. Docility in receiving the admonitions of good men; frequent visits to priests; spiritual conferences on the Divine laws; patience, frugality, modesty; the literal observance of the law; keeping before our eyes the four states into which living creatures pass after death; and meditation on the happy repose of Nicban;—these are distinguished rules for preserving man from wickedness.

“That intrepidity and serenity which good men preserve amid the eight evils of life; (abundance and want, joy and sorrow, popularity and abandonment, censure and praise;) their freedom from fear and inquietude; from the dark mists of concupiscence; and, finally, their insensibility to suffering;—these are four rare gifts, that remove men far from evil. Therefore, O sir! imprint well upon your heart the thirty-eight precepts I have just delivered. Let them be deeply rooted there, and see that you put them in practice.” *

It will be observed that Sakya, in the language of English Divines, sets forth “the frequent listening to the preaching of the Word of God,” as a means of overcoming evil inclinations. So that the people evidently believed themselves to be in actual possession of a revealed word of the Holy One. But lest, as there was grave danger, it be imagined that in the rendering the original language has been strained, so as to make it carry more extended meanings, we mention the fact that, avoiding other translations, we have here used that of a very zealous Christian Missionary—a man who will scarcely be considered open to that charge. The truth seems to be that, although a very fair man as a whole, Malcolm was still operated upon by priestly influence; in place of giving it any undue warmth, he has rather toned it down, a practice rather common with his class, as it is but too much so with others to furnish a freer translation. The Missionaries have been alarmed by what they heard from Buddhists respecting their general belief; they had nothing to teach them in the way of morals or in that of verbal religion; all their efforts have been directed to the doctrinal, as if it were the be-all and end-all of the subject. Malcolm, writing from his missionary point of view, very candidly says:—

‘No false religion, ancient or modern, is comparable to this. Its philosophy is, indeed, not exceeded in folly by any other; but its doctrines and practical piety bear a strong resemblance to those of holy Scripture. There is scarcely a principle or precept in the Bedagat which is not found in the Bible. Did the people but act up to its principles of peace and love, oppression and injury would be known no more within their borders. Its deeds of merit are in all cases either really beneficial to mankind, or harmless. It has no mythology of obscene and ferocious deities; no sanguinary

* Malcolm. *Travels in Hindustan*, &c., vol. 1, pp. 298, 299

'or impure observances; no self-inflicted tortures; no tyrannising priesthood; no confounding of right and wrong, by making certain iniquities laudable in worship. In its moral code, its descriptions of the purity and peace of the first ages, of the shortening of man's life because of his sins, &c., it seems to have followed genuine traditions. In almost every respect, it seems to be the best religion which man has ever invented.' *

The idea of its author's having followed "genuine traditions" will be readily passed over in kindly forgetfulness, when there is so much praise due to the author for his candour. It is refreshing to read such passages in a book from such a mint. Not that there is a word of praise beyond the due merits of the case; indeed, it would not be difficult to show that much more should be said, but we hardly expected so much truth from a Missionary. The exceeding rarity of justice and common sense, in *Mission Travels*, tended largely to increase the sale of Livingstone's work. People were unfeignedly surprised in finding matter of merit and value in such a work; but even more so when they discovered that the author had not peered through Missionary glasses at all he saw. The "unco' righteous" have been somewhat alarmed by the phenomenon, but we hope they will fail in their efforts to prune down the writings of others to their own miserable standard. The natives derive little advantage from our labours, and hence the justice of assuming that we should cease them; for where is the use of carrying them on if no one is to be benefited? A few men like Malcolm and Livingstone would soon reward us for our expenditure, by the store of valuable geographical and other scientific facts they would accumulate.

But it is not to be supposed that the American Missionary saw no evil. He concluded that Buddhism, with all its beauties, was a pest and a curse. He says:—

'Its entire base is false. It is built, not on love to God, nor even love to man but on personal merit. It is a system of religion without a God. It is literally atheism. Instead of a Heavenly Father, forgiving sin, and filial service from a pure heart, as the effect of love, it presents nothing to love, for its Deity is dead; nothing as the ultimate object of action but self. The system of merit corrupts and perverts to evil, the very precepts whose prototypes are found in the Bible; and causes an injurious effect on the heart, from the very duties which have a salutary effect on society. . . . It leaves no place for holiness; for everything is done for the single purpose of obtaining advantage.

'The same doctrine of merit destroys gratitude, either to God or man. If he is well off, it is because he deserves to be. If you do him a kindness, he cannot be persuaded that you have any other object or reason than to get merit; and feels that he compensates your generosity by furnishing the occasion. If the kindness be uncommon, he always suspects you of sinister designs. In asking a favour, at least of an equal, he does it peremptorily, and often haughtily, on the presumption that you will embrace the opportunity of getting merit; and, when his request is granted, retires without the slightest expression of gratitude. In fact, as has been already stated, there is no phrase in his language that corresponds with our "I thank you."

'It is enough to move our sympathy to know that this religion, however superior to any other invented by man, has no power to save. Though we have no stirring accounts to present of infants destroyed, or widows burned,

* Malcolm. *Travels in Hindustan*, &c., vol. 1, pp. 321, 322.

' or parents smothered in sacred mud, it is enough that *they are perishing in their sins.*'*

In other words, the people stand only in need of "doctrinal religion," which is all they can gain from the Missionary, for, by consent, it is admitted that they are well up in the moral code. But whether the doctrinal can do them any good is a question not relevant in this discussion. All that can here be said of the matter is, that, granting the statement of Smith to be correct, that the Buddhists have a fine code of morals, which, in their heathen condition, they never act up to, the objection will tell quite as fatally against those who bear the Christian name in England. The doctrinal does not appear to coerce them into the moral, and, we doubt not, if London were polled, or indeed all England, we should meet with quite as large a proportion who do not act up to their Christian religion, as we could of those who look only to the mere external in Buddhist lands.

P. W. P.

THE POWER OF NATURE AND WORKING MIRACLES.

So much has been said about miracles, and the explanatory theories are so numerous, that the majority of men are rendered incapable of forming a sound opinion upon the subject. Coming before them in an abstract form, and being untrained in logical processes, they become confused amid the variety of statements, and are incapable of singling out the substantial elements from whence alone the conclusion should be deduced. The most practical way of doing justice to the question is that of supposing ourselves to be spectators when a miracle is being wrought. Not that any educated men of our times are likely to believe a miracle has been effected in their presence; for, in such a case, they would conclude that a natural explanation could be applied. It is, however, quite possible for them to give freedom to their imagination, so as to fancy themselves mixed up with a group before whom this scene is transacted:—

Before us a woman reclines upon a couch; she is an invalid, and so infirm that for more than two years she has been unable to perform any of the household duties. She is still young and well-proportioned; her heart is in the fields and lanes; but so powerless is her physical frame that were a million offered as the reward she could not win it by walking forth from the city. Friends have gathered round her bed to suggest various plans and means whereby to win relief, but all without effect. The medical skill of her district has been vainly tried on her behalf; for although all the learned have done their best, she is still as infirm, or even more so, than when first they were summoned to her aid; they have advised and prescribed, but she has not experienced the smallest measure of benefit from all their prescriptions. What the nature of her disease is, none can tell. One speaks of "spinal derangement," and another of "general nervous debility;" but none have been able to state distinctly which part of her frame it is wherein lies the seat of her disorder. She eats, drinks, and sleeps; she can speak, think, and command; but although her mental powers are good, there is somewhere a defect, which unfits her from performing the ordinary duties of life, and leaves her hopelessly to pine, within the four walls of home, when others are away in the fields rejoicing and gay.

She has long believed that all hope is gone; but now, behold, some one

* Malcolm. *Travels in Hindustan, &c.*, vol. 1, 322-4.

comes to tell of a marvellously wise and good physician coming that way, who is known to have cured many persons of their diseases, and that, too, when, by the oldest practitioners, they had been declared incurable. Within the sick heart the emotion of hope is re-aroused and becomes strong; and as one after another the instances of remarkable healings are related, that hope swells into a perfect confidence, and the patient believes that the great physician can also drive away her mysterious disease. Anon the mighty healer comes upon the scene, and then how bright and radiant are the eyes of the hopeful invalid! Surely the long hoped for hour has at length arrived! Will it not be that deliverance is near? The healer speaks kindly, looks favourably upon the claimant, and then solemnly pronounces the word, "Arise, and be thou healed!"

Even as touched by some electric shock, she who had long lain infirm obeys this command; an hour since she could not have crossed the room, but now she rises and walks with perfect freedom; neither does there appear to be any weakness or indecision about her movements. She is healed, in the full and proper meaning of that term, and from that hour can go about transacting the business and performing the duties of her station; she walks and acts as freely and completely as her sisters can; she has been released from her infirmity and has become whole.

Many of those who witness this will declare that a miracle has been wrought, but others pause to inquire whether the whole result may not be attributed to the operation of known and appreciable causes; while many sceptical persons would declare at once that no cure had been wrought; that there had been no disease to cure; and, in fact, that the entire scene was one of enthusiasm and fraud. We remember hearing in Merthyr of such a case, the story being told by a very earnest Churchman who hated the Mormon leaders, unto whose agency the miracle had been attributed. The woman in question had been an invalid nearly three years; still our Churchman friend declared that there was no doubt of the whole affair being a fraud; and, judging the case from his point of view, it was impossible to conclude otherwise. More reasonable observers, after seeing the woman healed, would inquire if the changed condition were not attributable to the power of the nervous over the muscular frame, of the mental over the physical; or, in other words, to the power of the mind over the body. There would be far better reasons for assuming the latter than the former. The idea of fraud is too easily adopted, for even in the ordinary historical cases, it is utterly incompatible with many of the facts; all of which tend to establish that the friends of the healed persons were as much astonished at the phenomena as strangers were.

The philosophical conclusion, and, under the circumstances, it is the only sound one, would be that, in our present state of limited knowledge, it is vain to hope to explain precisely how the visible effect has been produced. We have seen the change wrought, but cannot penetrate to its cause; therefore, wisdom suggests the prudence of holding our peace when the questions we debate are whether it were a miracle of power or doctrine, of special grace or universal import. There can be no satisfactory answer given to the inquiring, or even to the unread, unless upon the arrogant assumption that the speakers really know the *modus operandi*, which all intelligent thinkers feel to be untrue. But, unhappily, this negative answer does not satisfy those who have received it; they are not to be balked of "the profound satisfaction of knowing that "the cure was miraculous;" they are certain of the whole proceeding being

supernatural; and when it is suggested that, probably, after all, the cure was nothing more than the result of nervous excitement, they smile in unmingled pity upon the sceptical repudiation of miracles.

Look well upon the healed one, and then, remembering how great is the measure of human ignorance, it will be wisely asked how any sane men can dare to set forth that this cure was wrought by supernatural power alone—that it could not have been effected by lesser means. Have they so completely exhausted Nature as to know all her powers and forces, all that she is capable or incapable of doing? Have they descended into the heart of the earth to investigate the order of its growth, to learn the mode in which its rocky ribs were formed, how its varied strata were deposited, and how the entire series of gradual or convulsive changes were brought about before the former globe stood ready for its new green carpet, whereon man was intended to tread as a lord and master? Have they bounded off into space to compass the entire circle of the stars, so as to comprehend the order of their march, with the law of their development, or even to learn the causes which shattered a planet belonging to our sphere, leaving its fragments still to circle round their central sun? Or, to descend to lesser matters, have they discovered how it is that the eagle receives a new beak, the wounded crab a new claw, and the slip of geranium a new root? Can they inform us all about the means and manner, the forces and laws, through which are daily done these and a million other things? What man among them will answer that all these laws and causes are known? But if they remain unknown—if the “how” all these wonders are wrought remain inscrutable, and we cannot demonstrate in what way such effects are wrought, is it not manifestly presumptuous to declare that Nature has no forces at her disposal by means of which such cures as those described can be effected? If a man know not what sum of money another has in his purse, how shall he dare to say it is impossible for him to pay a bill of five pounds when demanded? If a Frenchman, coming to dwell among us, declare, without studying our law-books or even our language, that we have no law against hocussing, or enabling us to punish offenders, will he not be guilty of presumptuous folly, for which he must pay, if he should be mad enough to commit a crime? And yet, in what sense is he wiser who declares that such a cure was wrought against Nature, although, when he does this, he is ignorant of those laws through which even her ordinary daily phenomena are manifested? When men can account for and adequately explain in what manner it is that the various daily changes are wrought, there will be less presumption in declaring other changes of an unusual nature, which they have just witnessed, could not have been wrought under the agency of natural laws. Until that time arrives, it will be but a proof of their fairness and modesty to confess the obvious truth, that they are unable to explain the cure which they have seen. They know not how it was done, and it is but honest to avoid professing to know what they know not.

The case is not altered even if we speak of raising the dead; for although we do not see it done, and do not believe it, still, when the question is abstractedly discussed, there appears to be no greater reason for supposing a special action of the Divinity is needed to raise the dead man but not the seemingly dead fuschia, and other flowering plants, which in winter have no branches above the soil. Through annual experience we know that the latter occurs, but not the former, and hence our feeling against its being considered likely to occur; yet if we were not familiar with the fact that the dead rise not, we should find no difficulty in believing they could do so. It would not

appear to be a whit more marvellous for them to arise and walk than for the grain of corn taken from the hands of a mummy to put forth its young green leaf, and then to yield fruit, after lying so quietly during thousands of years. In the nature of things, when externally viewed, there is no reason in favour of one which is not equally available for the other; so that he that knew not of the unreturning grave, would experience no difficulty in believing that the first-nipped man would rise again with the first-stripped tree. He would not think a miracle necessary in one case and not in the other; so that there is no excuse for those who would treat the restoration of the dead as being superior in its evidential value, or in any way superior, to the healing of the sick.

The conclusions to which these Absolutes have vaulted are so vast and so utterly unwarranted that language fails us when called upon to define the limits of their great presumption; for every explanatory word does but help to show their incapacity to furnish substantial proof. There is so much of arrogant assumption about these assertions that we prefer to believe they are made without any true perception of their nature, by men who have never considered them. They involve no less than this—that it is in the power of man to say fully and truly what Nature can or cannot do; and to define her powers even in the minutest details. To the ignorant man, it is not strange that this should be attempted; his knowledge of the natural forces is so small as to render it impossible he can ever suspect their variety and nature; and while he continues to believe the “patriarch Abraham walked with Him towards Sodom,” he cannot conceive there is either profanity or impropriety in declaring ourselves capable of saying what He will accomplish, and in what manner He has worked. But when man has been raised from the dead level of ignorance to the comprehension of even one series of natural laws in all their force and detail, he no longer feels at liberty to limit the power of Nature, and becomes conscious of the tremendous nature of the conclusion that the event just witnessed was effected through a volition of the Deity.

P. W. P.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE “SONG OF SOLOMON.”

(Continued from page 304.)

SECTION IV.

CHAPTERS V. 2.—VIII. 4.

The Shulamite relates to the court ladies a dream which she has had, in which she manifests great attachment to her beloved (2—8). The court ladies, surprised at this extraordinary enthusiasm, ask what there is particular in his person to cause such an attachment (9). The Shulamite then gives a description of him (10—16). Whereupon the court ladies inquire where he is, and offer to seek him (ch. vi. 1). The Shulamite, suspecting their intention, gives an evasive answer to their inquiry (2, 3). The king, having heard the Shulamite's beloved mentioned, immediately comes forward and seeks to win her affections (4—9); in exalting her beauty, he repeats how the court ladies had praised her when they first saw her (10). The Shulamite, having explained how she came to be seen by the court ladies, withdraws (11, 12). The king calls her back (ch. vii. 1); and, as she returns, describes her charms, and wishes to enjoy the love of one so beautiful (2—10). The Shulamite refuses the king's desire, stating that her affections were espoused

(11); then addressing herself to her beloved, she asks him to go home with her, and descants upon their rural pleasures (12—14). Remembering, however, that circumstances even at home prevented the full manifestation of her love, she longs for those obstacles to be removed (ch. viii. 1, 2). Overcome by her feelings, she wishes that none but her beloved may support her (3), and with the little strength she has left, adjures the court ladies not to persuade her to change her love (4).

- The Shulamite.* 2 I was sleeping, but my heart kept awake,
Hark! my beloved! he is knocking!
Open to me, my sister, my love!
My dove, my perfect beauty!
But my head is filled with dew,
My locks with the drops of the night.
- 3 I have put off my tunic,
How shall I put it on?
I have washed my feet,
How shall I soil them?
- 4 My beloved withdrew his hand from the door hole,
And my heart was disquieted within me.
- 5 I immediately arose to open to my beloved,
And my hands dropped with myrrh,
And my fingers with liquid myrrh,
Upon the handles of the bolt.
- 6 I opened to my beloved,
But my beloved had withdrawn, was gone!
My soul departed when he spoke of it!
I sought him, and found him not;
I called him, and he answered me not.
- 7 The watchmen who patrol the city found me:
They beat me, they wounded me;
The keepers of the walls stripped me of my veiling garment.
- 8 I adjure you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
If ye shall find my beloved,
What will ye tell him?
Tell him that I am sick of love.

Daughters of Jerusalem.

- 9 What is thy beloved more than another beloved,
O thou fairest among women?
What is thy beloved, more than another beloved,
That thou thus adjurest us?

- The Shulamite.* 10 My beloved is white and ruddy,
Distinguished above thousands;
11 His head is as the finest gold,
His flowing locks are black as the raven.
- 12 His eyes, like doves in water streams,
Are bathing in milk, sitting on fulness;
- 13 His cheeks like beds of balsam,
Elevations of aromatic plants;
His lips are like lilies distilling liquid myrrh.
- 14 His hands like golden cylinders, inlaid with chrysolite,
His body is like polished ivory, covered with sapphires.
- 15 His legs are like pillars of marble
Based upon pedestals of gold.
His aspect is like that of Lebanon.
He is distinguished as the cedars.
- 16 His voice is exquisitely sweet;
Yea, his whole person is exceedingly lovely.

Such is my beloved, such my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem.

Daughters of Jerusalem.

CHAP. VI. 1 Whither is thy beloved gone,
O thou fairest among women?
Whither is thy beloved turned away?
Say, that we may seek him with thee.

The Shulamite. 2 My beloved is gone down into his garden,
To the beds of aromatics,
To feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.
3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine;
He who feeds his flock among the lilies.

Solomon. 4 Graceful art thou, O my love, as Tirzah,
Beautiful as Jerusalem,
Awe-inspiring as bannered hosts!
5 Turn away thine eyes from me,
For they inspire me with awe!
Thy hair is like a flock of goats
Springing down Mount Gilead;
6 Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep,
Which come up from the washing-pool;
All of which are paired,
And not one among them is bereaved.
7 Like a part of the pomegranate
Are thy cheeks behind thy veil.
8 I have threescore queens,
And fourscore concubines,
And maidens without number;
9 But she is my only one, my dove, my perfect beauty.
She, the delight of her mother,
She, the darling of her parent!
The damsels saw her and praised her;
The queens also, and the concubines, and extolled her thus:
10 "Who is she that looks forth as the morn,
Beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun,
Awe-inspiring as bannered hosts?"

The Shulamite. 11 I went down into the nut-garden,
To look among the green plants by the river,
To see whether the vine was budding,
Whether the pomegranates were in bloom.
12 Unwittingly had my longing soul brought me
To the chariots of the companions of the prince.

(*She goes away*).

Solomon.

CHAP. VII. 1 Return, return, O Shulamite,
Return, return, that we look at thee.

The Shulamite. What will you behold in the Shulamite?

Solomon. Like a dance to double choirs.
2 How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O noble maiden!
The circuits of thy thighs like ornaments,
The work of a master's hands.
3 Thy navel is like a round goblet,
Let not spiced wine be wanted in it;
Thy body is like a heap of wheat,
Hedged round with lilies.
4 Thy bosom is like two young fawns,
Twins of a gazelle.

- 5 Thy neck is like an ivory tower;
Thine eyes are as the pools in Heshbon,
By the populous gate;
Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon,
Looking towards Damascus.
- 6 Thy head upon thee as purple,
And the tresses of thy head as crimson.
The king is captivated by the ringlets:
How beautiful and how charming,
O love, in thy fascinations!
- 7 This thy growth is like a palm-tree,
And thy bosom like its clusters.
- 8 I long to climb this palm-tree,
I long to clasp its branches.
May thy bosom be unto me
As the clusters of the vine,
And the odour of thy breath
As that of apples;
- 9 And thy speech as delicious wine,
Which to my friend flows down with mellowed sweetness,
And causes slumbering lips to speak.
- The Shulamite.* 10 I belong to my beloved,
And it is for me to desire him.
- 11 Come, my beloved, let us go into the country,
Let us abide in the villages.
- 12 We will go early to the vineyards,
We will see whether the vine flourishes;
Whether the buds open;
Whether the pomegranates blossom;
There will I give thee my love.
- 13 The mandrakes diffuse fragrance,
And at our door are all sorts of delicious fruit,
Both new and old;
I have reserved them, O my beloved, for thee!
- CHAP. VIII. 1 Oh that thou wert as my brother,
As one who had been nourished in the bosom of my mother!
If I found thee in the street I would kiss thee,
And should no more be reproached.
I would lead thee thence,
I would bring thee into the house of my mother;
Thou shouldst be my teacher,
I would cause thee to drink
Of the aromatic wine,
Of my pomegranate juice.
- 3 Let his left hand be under my head,
And his right hand support me!
- 4 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
Neither to incite nor to excite my affection
Till it desires another love.

SECTION V.

CHAPTER VIII. 5—14.

The Shulamite, released from the palace, returns to her native place with her beloved (5). On their way home they visit the spot where they had been first pledged to each other; and there they renew their vows (6, 7). On their arrival at the Shulamite's home, her brothers are reminded of the promise they had made to reward their sister's virtue (9, 10). The Shulamite men-

tions the greatness of her temptations, and her victory over them (11, 12).
The shepherds visit her, to whom she declares, according to request, her unabated attachment to her beloved shepherd (13, 14).

The Companions of the Shepherd.

5 Who is it that comes up from the plain,
Leaning upon her beloved?

The Shulamite. Under this apple-tree I won thy heart,
Here thy mother travailed,
Here labouring she gave thee birth.

6 Oh, place me as a seal upon thy heart,
As a seal upon thine hand!
For love is strong as death,
Affection as inexorable as Hades.
Its flames are flames of fire,
The flames of the Eternal.

7 Floods cannot quench love;
Streams cannot sweep it away.
If one should offer all his wealth for love,
He would be utterly despised.

One of the Brothers of the Shulamite.

8 Our sister is still young,
And is not yet marriageable.
What shall we do for our sister,
When she shall be demanded in marriage?

Another Brother. 9 If she be like a wall,
We will build upon her a silver turret.
But if she be like a door,
We will enclose her with boards of cedar.

The Shulamite. 10 I am like a wall,
And my bosom is as towers!
Then I was in his eyes
As one that findeth favour.
11 Solomon had a vineyard in Baal-hammon;
He let out the vineyard to tenants;
Each of whom yielded for the fruit of it
A thousand shekels of silver.
12 I will keep my own vineyard:
Be the thousands thine, O Solomon,
And the two hundreds to the keepers of the fruit.

The Shepherd. 13 O thou that dwellest in the gardens,
My companions are listening to thy voice,
Let me hear thy voice!

The Shulamite. 14 Haste, O my beloved,
And be like the gazelle, as the young one of the hind,
Over the mountain of spices!

This, then, is the original poem, as it proceeded from its author's hands, so far as it can be presented through a translated medium; it remains for me now to ask your attention to the various considerations suggested by it.

(To be continued.)

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OUT OF THE CLOUD;

OR, AN ENGLISH RECTOR IN SEARCH OF A CREED.

A TALE; BY P. W. P.



CHAPTER I.

THE HOUSE OF SORROW.

It was on a cold, wet, uncomfortable and cheerless night, in the winter of 1850, that a cab was sharply driven along the road between the Southampton Railway Station and the Common. When it arrived at the end of the Polygon a signal was given from within, and the vehicle was drawn up near to the end of the terrace; the driver received what must have been a liberal fare, for he was profuse in his thanks, but the young man who stepped out paused not to heed the unusual shower of benedictions, and, indeed, appeared not even to hear them. He moved on quickly past the first houses in the terrace, but stayed so long before one of the neatest and handsomest in the row, that the driver, who was still watching him, could not avoid muttering, "Well, he's a queer chap, that; anyhow, he needn't have been in such a hurry, telling me to drive for life. Now he's got there he don't seem to want to go in."

The young man's conduct astonished the driver more and more, for after surveying the house from top to bottom for the tenth time, and looking into the area, to see if any light were burning in the kitchen, where all was buried in profound darkness, he advanced toward the door and knocked, but so irresolutely and faintly that the sound thereof died away before reaching the end of the passage. He laid his hand upon the shining brass bell-pull, but moved it not, and, as it was natural to expect, his faint summons remained unanswered. After standing three or four minutes at the door he descended the steps, and retreated to the opposite side of the road, where, with his gaze intently fixed upon the house, he stood immoveable.

As he stood there, the dark masses of cloud broke asunder; and although the rain had scarcely ceased, the full moon shone out clear, round, and beautiful. For a few moments the two forces, light and darkness, which to Eastern sages were typical of joy and sorrow, seemed to be contending for the

mastery; and, to some considerable extent, this mingled weather was representative of the youth's mood of mind and fortune. The rich moonlight fell full upon him, and never could its beams have lit up a manlier form. About five feet ten inches in height, he was sinewy, and well made up in proportion. There was no redundancy of flesh, but every limb was well formed and rounded. It was the frame of one who could endure much hardship. His chest was full and strong, giving promise of a man who could pull well with the oar, or sing a fine old song of the sea-kings, and storms and battles. Now that his coat and vest were flowing open, it was evident, from the deep heavings of the chest, that some strong passion or emotion was moving him; his hands, too, were clenched so firmly that they seemed to be grasping some terrible enemy, with whom, mentally, he was contending. While he stood, a policeman passed, cast a glance upon him, looked sorrowful, and moved on with quicker step until he reached the cab by which the youth had arrived. The driver hailed, and asked, had he noticed the "young gent" with his back against the rails? "You know," said he, "he jumped out of the train into my cab, and told me to drive for life up here. Well, I drove; and my horse can go. There aint a better, kinder bit of horseflesh in Hampshire than my Belter. I've been offered more than £10 above what I bought him for. . . . But, as I was a saying, I drove him up here like lightning. There was Crack Jemmy with Lobe's silk-van tried to keep up with us, but it was no go. And when we got here he paid me handsome; that he did. It aint often as we gets anybody to pay like he did. They hauls us cabbies up when we makes a mistake about distances, and tries to get sixpence over our rights, and all the blessed papers takes it up, and bullies us as a set of robbers; but I want to know why they don't haul up them closefisted gents as tries to cut us down sixpence below what the scale gives us? There's nothing said about their trying to do us out of a shilling, or more; but all the world hears about it if we tries to get sixpence above our fare. . . . But now he's got here, there he stands, and aint no nearer. Now, what did he want to come so quick for? What can he want standing there? Do you think he's all right in his head?"

During the time that "Cabby" was delivering himself of this speech, the policeman was doing something with his lamp, which was rather out of order. When he had done it, he simply replied, "Oh, yes; he's right enough, I'll warrant. It's young Mr. Lester, and I've heard his mother was nearly killed yesterday. So I suppose he's just come home, and don't like to go in. I know when my brother was run over at the races, and they took him home for dead, I was working away at Shirley, and didn't hear of it till late on in the evening; then, when I got over home, I couldn't go in-doors; though I had the latch in my hand twenty times, if it had been to save my life I couldn't lift it. Let him be; he's all right, and he'll go in soon, I dare say." The colloquy ended there, for both policeman and driver went off in opposite directions.

But he of whom they had been speaking heeded them not. His pale face—not pale through ill health—was still turned upon the house, and it was evident that the fiend and the angel, fear and hope, were striving within him for the mastery. His eyes, large and black, shone with an unnatural fire; but, seeing by the light upon a curtain that a small lamp was being moved in one of the upper rooms, he suddenly recrossed the road, knocked with greater force, and this time his summons was almost instantly answered. A female servant, who had long passed the middle age, opened the door; and on seeing

him she was very demonstrative of her joy, and seemed, for the moment, to be utterly unconscious both of what she said and did.

The door had hardly been closed behind them before the young man had seized her arm, and asked, "How is mother? Am I in time to see her alive?"

To which, after kissing him, with all the fondness of a privileged old nurse, the woman, called Jane, confusedly and incoherently replied, "Yes, Master George, it is all right: it will all go well—it must. Oh, sir, dear George, you can't think how glad I am to see you. I'm sure Mistress will get better—she must. . . . Mary, your Miss Mary, I mean, is here. . . . The doctor will be back again soon; he said he'd call again to-night."

"But," interposed the anxious George, "Tell me, Jane, how is mother now?"

It was useless to question her, for evidently terror and joy had completely unbalanced her small powers of coherent thought. All he obtained in answer was, "Mistress is sure to get better; she must. . . . Your dog is down stairs now, for we are afraid he would disturb Mistress. . . . We were terribly afraid you would not get the letter. It was down them ugly turn-about stairs she fell: but a fall can't hurt her so much. I've fallen many a time, and I wish it had been me this turn. She must get better, she must." And here, her fears becoming strong enough to contradict her positive assurances, bursting into tears, she sat down upon a chair in the small room into which she had followed him while speaking, and wept convulsively.

Vainly did George endeavour to extract from her some connected narrative of what had occurred—of how his mother was—who was with her, and if he might venture upon entering her apartment, for although she attempted to answer, her thoughts wandered, and she was stopped by her tears; so that after uttering a few kind words, he turned away to seek information elsewhere, or to gain admittance to his mother's apartment.

Quickly, but with light step, ascending the well-known stairs, he reached his mother's sleeping apartment; but at that moment his sister Ella was upon the landing, gently closing the door after her. Turning round, she started on seeing George; yet with that instinctive power of woman engaged in tending the sick she betrayed no emotion, but calmly whispered, "Asleep," and motioned him to descend the stairs to her little sitting-room, where they could speak without fear of arousing the sleeper. The door, however, had scarcely closed behind them before she was utterly deprived of power and consciousness. She was not a girl of shallow sentiment, a mere simpering miss who sheds tears to order, and faints when a frog crosses her path; she was not one of those who have been robbed of their womanhood at a boarding-school, who can play a grief or pretend a sorrow. Neither was she of the cold unfeeling class, but a thoroughly honest, strong English maiden, one who could freely lavish tears and merry laughter in their due season, and who was strong enough to keep the tear fountains closed when the voice of duty bade her remember there was somewhat else to do than to gratify her own feelings. Now, although her heart was wrung with fear and grief, she had walked down the stairs into the room with all the calmness of some Roman matron; but before that brotherly and sisterly embrace was over, she had sunk perfectly unconscious into his young strong arms, where she lay bereft of motion, and seemingly of life. Gently placing her upon a couch, bathing her temples with water near at hand, not without feeling alarmed, he awaited her return

to consciousness, which happily was not long delayed. Then came the long pent up tears, which for two days had been restrained only by great exertion; these gave relief, so that within a quarter of an hour she was able to reply to her brother's questions.

From her answers he gleaned that on the previous day, shortly after breakfast, his mother, in her usual kindly way, had been playing with her little godson, who was up to his eyes in glee rolling oranges about the floor. The door of their sitting-room had been left open, one of the oranges passed through on to the landing, the child ran after it; when, fearing lest he should fall down the stairs, Mrs. Lester darted after him out of the room. In some unaccountable manner her foot was caught by the landing carpet, which threw her with great force down the stairs, and thus it was that she met the fate from which she had rushed to protect the child. It appeared that no bones were broken, yet the family medical man had intimated that a broken bone would probably have been a lesser evil. "But," said Ella, "I hope she is not in so much danger now as when I wrote my strange letter to your Oxford Chambers. I was alarmed lest you should not be there to get it, and then I was afraid about having written too strongly about immediate danger. I do not feel half so much fear now as I did then, and now that you are here I seem to feel that dear mother will soon recover."

There was ground enough for hope to build upon, and when the first burst of mutual grief was over, the twain failed not to build apace. The idea of her dying was too terrible for them to admit into their chapter of possibilities, and repeating the language of nurse Jane, which even amid their sorrow brought a half-smile to their faces, they concluded that "She would recover—she must" do so. It was however but a delusive hope.

At this moment Jane, or "nurse Jane" as they generally called her, entered the room, bearing some creature comforts which she had hastily prepared for her young favourite. She hoped that both her children would take something, and although the toasted cakes of her own making were left untasted, the tea was freely used, and proved acceptable. Jane stood there as a privileged person to advise and suggest, but, as a rule, although her kindness was unbounded, her knowledge and judgment were particularly limited. She recounted all she knew of the accident, which was not much, but it led to Ella remembering more than she had previously related. "When dear mother had fallen," said she, "I was in the room, and when I got to her side she was lying perfectly unconscious of all that had happened. I cannot describe what I felt; but I cried out for Jane to fly away and bring back Doctor Moule, or some other medical man."

"Yes," interposed Jane, "and as I was running down the road what should I see but his carriage coming. I shouted out to the coachman, but he seemed to think I was a mad woman. The Doctor saw me, and knew who I was, bless his good heart; when I got to the carriage he opened the door, and before I could tell him half of what had happened to poor mistress, he said, 'Come into the carriage—you must.' Ah, he's a good man, is Doctor Moule, and he brought me home again."

"He arrived," resumed Ella, "before we had got dear mother removed to her room. Cousin Mary and Mrs. Dacer came in at the moment, and they helped, but I fear if it had not been for the kind assistance of the Doctor, we could not have got her into bed. We cut off most of her clothes, and during the whole time, until he had taken a little blood, he never spoke a word of hope; then I thought he appeared to form a more favourable opinion. But

before going away he strictly enjoined that no person should be allowed to enter the room save those who lived in the house—no visitor upon any consideration; and that if mother rallied and seemed desirous to speak, we were to tell her that all conversation was forbidden. He came in twice during the day, and last night he remained above an hour. I told him of my having written to you, but that I was afraid my letter was too alarming; but he said I had done right, as none but an alarming letter would be sure to bring you over, and that you should be here at once. I felt his words ringing in my ears like a death knell; for you know he is as careful against unduly alarming the friends of his patients, as he is of saying anything to cherish false hopes in dangerous cases."

Lester heard all, and appeared like one who could not hear enough, yet he was unusually silent, and evidently his thoughts were of the worst that would happen. For a moment hope seemed to gain an ascendancy in his mind, when the usual glow of health and joy revisited his fine face; but it soon gave place to darker thoughts, which however he carefully wrapped up in his own mind, and thus forebore to speak. He was deeply impressed by one little circumstance related by his sister—that it was not until the afternoon of the current day his mother had rallied sufficiently to be able to speak, when her first words were, "George, my dear child, George!" Ella had leant over to whisper, "He is coming, dear mother, he will soon be here," to which she replied, "Soon, yes soon, or it will be too late!" Since then she has twice asked for you.

Lester had dreamt the night before of hearing his mother cry out "come soon or you will be too late"; twice had he been roused by the seeming shrillness of the voice, and when in the early morning he dreamt it again, he had risen in alarm and dressed himself. The painful impression had, however, worn away, and he accounted for his dream by the fact, that being engaged to row that morning in a race, the desire to be up early had operated upon his mind with sufficient strength to beget the dream. But now that the words were repeated to him by his sister as words actually spoken by his parent, although in no sense superstitious, he found it impossible to prevent sad thoughts from entering his mind. It might be, as he half-believed, only one of those curious coincidences which happen in life to all men; yet its strangeness operated painfully upon his mind. While he was meditating upon this, the knock of Doctor Moule was heard at the door, and although Lester was desirous of seeing him, he feared to do so; but there was no escape, and half-reluctantly, half-gladly, he rose to receive the visitor.

On entering the room Doctor Moule greeted George with the warmth and earnestness of an old friend, and seemed to be greatly relieved by his presence. He was a tall, mild-looking, intellectual, and altogether a most gentlemanly man; one who evidently was much superior, both in mind and manner, to the ordinary run of his profession. Taking a chair near the fire, after hearing from Miss Lester that her mother had fallen asleep, he gently, almost paternally, intimated his desire to spend a few moments alone with George. Ella fearfully quitted the room, when, without uttering any of the ordinary commonplaces about hope and resignation, and bearing our losses meekly, he took the hand of the youth, and said, "My dear George, you are a man now, and must bear manfully the blow about to descend upon you. If you feel it like a man you will be the better able to bear it bravely. As an old friend to your family I shall speak plainly, because it is best for all parties. This is your first great trial, but it will not be your last. Do not buoy your-

self up with false and delusive hopes, but stand prepared to bear that which, under the circumstances, will be the least of many threatened evils, and to prevent the worst. Your mother will probably rally a little, and it is likely that after this sleep she will be able to talk with you, but you must be prepared to see her sink back, perhaps leaving half her sentence unspoken. Nothing that human power can do will save her; but you can save your sister, and cheer your cousin. You are all they will have to rely upon. Your sister is one of those quiet, undemonstrative girls, who will not allow their grief to be seen by strangers. She is like the eagle which covers its wound with its close-pressed pinions. But she has a keenly sensitive nature, and what I fear is that, through being so jealous in hiding her grief, she may irreparably damage her mental constitution. That is what I deem the worst evil we have now to contemplate, and it rests with you, and you only to prevent this. Be much with her, do all you can to cause her tears to flow, and then, my dear boy, although you cannot save your mother's life, you will save your sister from a fate which would be more terrible than death."

George listened to him in silence, and, by a strong effort of the will, stifling his suffocating sensations, he promised obedience, and then asked if he might go up to see his mother when she awoke.

"Well, yes, perhaps you may," said the adviser; "but I should like to be there, so as to be able to check any undue excitement. I do not intend leaving until she awakes, unless called away. I will then see her, and if there is no promise of amendment, I shall advise your admission." At this moment a gentle knock was heard at the door, which, the Doctor, knowing who was there, opened, and Ella entered looking much more cheerful. She said that her mother was awake, and quite free from pain, that she knew her son had arrived, and wished to see him. Judging from the countenance of the physician, he was not so well pleased by this intelligence, and mildly, yet authoritatively, intimated that, with Ella, he would see her first, and then, if prudent, he would come down again for George.

They ascended to the sick room, and found the patient much disappointed that George was not with them. There was an unusual dash of asperity in the tone of her voice, and this, coupled with the peculiar anxiety of her countenance, usually so placid, indicated to the physician that the end was drawing nigh. Seating himself by the bedside, and with the tenderness of an old friend, he did his best to impress upon her mind how necessary it was that, for the sake of her children, she should exercise all her self-control.

The idea and desire uppermost in her mind was immediately to see her son; and comprehending all his fears, as well as anticipating all his arguments, she said, "Do not be alarmed about my becoming excited. There is now no danger of that; but I wish to convey my last solemn injunctions to him; I know that my time is short, so let me see him at once, and I will be as calm as you can desire me to be. Do not shorten the duration of my earthly happiness!"

Thus solemnly appealed to the worthy Doctor, who, despite his long professional training, was as much moved as if it were the first death-bed he had been present at, interposed no word of objection; but answered, "You shall have what you desire." He descended the stairs, took George by the arm, bade him bravely exercise his strong will, to keep down his emotions, were it "only in mercy to the two girls; and remember," said he, "that, if you give way, the sight of your sorrow will probably hasten the end, so that you will lose many words it is important for you to hear."

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XXI.

WYCLIFFE.

HISTORIANS of English history give us the detail of a battle of Hastings, and the facts connected with what they call the Norman Conquest of England; accurately or otherwise, they write down the succession of the kings of the Norman race who ruled over the conquered ones, and tell the names of the barons who divided the English soil (or a portion of it) between them. Looking from the civil to the ecclesiastical annals, we find there marshalled, more or less correctly, the facts relating to the settlement and growth of Christianity, or rather Priestcraft, under the auspices of the Papacy; we learn how the power of the Pope grew, how the Papal authority was respected, and how, at last, an Innocent III. received from John Sansterre (calling himself king of England) a grant of the land, and how said John received it back to be held thenceforth by him and his successors in fee of the Pope. The facts are all duly set down with more or less of diligence and research, but the soul of them, the meaning of them, the great principles at work beneath them, these are nowhere found in our history books. The great Earl of Chatham was in the habit of saying, that all he knew of English history was derived from a study of Shakspeare's historical dramas; and they, with Scott's, and, in a still more eminent degree, Bulwer's historical novels, may be said to contain more of true history than any of the professed histories we have. It is true, as certain dry-as-dust matter-of-fact people have now and then troubled themselves to point out, the chronology is sometimes wrong, but there is something above chronology, and he who would gain an idea of the spirit of the ages represented in those works, who would grasp the principles which explain the dry facts, would do well, despite these chronological croakers, to read and thoroughly digest those dramas and novels, provided always, of course, that he have not the time and talent to go to the original sources—the chronicles, the acts of parliament, and other records existent—and distil the essence of history from them for himself. With reference to the Church history, too, we are bound to make an honourable exception of the author of the "History of Latin Christianity," who has to a greater extent than any other Church historian written out the spirit of the religious and ecclesiastical history of those times.

Had the history—ecclesiastical and civil—of those times been really written out as it was lived, the questions would have been asked, Did the Normans really achieve a conquest?—Was the power of the Pope what it seemed to be? And, in the answers to these questions, we should have learnt that, through all those centuries, the Saxon element was a living force in history, and was gradually, though surely, encroaching on the Norman despotism of the aristocracy, and the Latin despotism of the clergy; that, in fact, neither "conquering" William of Normandy, nor the "all potent" Papacy ever really made good their seeming conquest of the English people, who emerged from the thralldom which the Norman barons and kings and the Latin Church had for a time laid upon them, stronger and freer than they had ever been. It is with the Saxon movement against the Latin Church despotism, and with one who is entitled to be called its representative man—Wycliffe; the English Proto-Reformer, and the Father of Religious Freedom—that we shall have in this and some succeeding articles to occupy the attention of our readers.

Born about the year 1324 (the place of his birth being the village of Wiclif, near Richmond, in Yorkshire, and, probably taking his name, as was

common in those days, from his birthplace), Wycliffe was just entering into early manhood at the time the great plague of 1347 was devastating Europe, and, in connection with that event, his name first comes before us. Of his youth nothing more can be told than that he studied at Oxford. He was at Oxford at the time of the plague. Commencing in Tartary in 1345, this fearful pestilence desolated Asia, and, after traversing Europe, carried its ravages into Africa. One-half the population of the world are said to have fallen victims to it; at least, this is certain, that one-third of the inhabitants of Europe were swept away by it. This is the plague which, in its ravages and effects in Florence, is so terribly and truthfully described by Bulwer in one of the chapters of his "Rienzi;" and, terrible as the picture is, it is not overdrawn. In many of the cities of Europe not more than a tithe of the inhabitants remained alive, and of these but few remained; fear had driven them forth, as if, by change of place, they could fly from a danger which was everywhere. All the ties which bind men in society were broken, the very bases of social existence were uprooted. If two men met at the street-corners, they turned and fled from each other; parents forsook children; children deserted their parents; no bond between man and man but dissolved before the universal fear. Of course, there were some noble exceptions to this, but they were few. The most hideous results produced were the moral degradation and ruin. On every hand were now displayed the master passions of men let loose; some passing from house to house where only the sick and dying were, and gathering together the treasure which no one could and no one cared to guard; others passing their time in sensual orgies, putting in practice the maxim, "Let us eat, and drink, and make merry; for to-morrow we die." Meanwhile the destroying demon passed on in his fearful track. He who to-day was well, to-morrow was borne to the grave. "It was," says the chronicler, "a fearful mortality, and more of the young than the old. They died in such numbers that we could not bury them. They were struck by death in the midst of health. A swelling would suddenly arise in the groin, or under the armpits. It was an infallible sign of death. Many died through the force of imagination." A terrible time, made all the more terrible by the occurrence of several earthquakes in various parts of Europe, with heavy floods. In England, it was the wettest season ever known.

Mortal terror sat enthroned as despot over the souls of men during all that terrible year, and we can hardly wonder that the idea became widely spread that the world was about to end, an idea which would be all the more familiar to the minds of men from the preachings and teachings of the Fraticelli. Not a few began to think that the doctrine of the Everlasting Gospel was indeed true. The Abbot Joachim's book was familiar to Wycliffe, and he, too, came to the conclusion that there was truth in it. It is a somewhat curious coincidence that the man who was afterwards to become the great enemy of the Mendicant Friars, should have been operated on by the same influences, and, to some extent, have espoused the same views, as their old enemies, the Fraticelli, without having any connection with them.

The deep impressions caused by the Plague on his mind, led to his composing his earliest work, prophesying the end of all things, a tract entitled, "The Last Age of the Church." In this work, Wycliffe declares that the plague was the judgment of God on men as a punishment for the evils they had committed, but more especially for the sins of the Church. In prophetic strain, he says: "Both vengeance of the sword and mischiefs

"unknown before, by which men in those days should be punished, should befall for sin of priests; and, ere long, men should fall on them, and cast them out of their fat benefices, and they should say, He came into his benefice by his kindred; this, by covenant made before; that, for his service; and this for money came into God's Church. Then should each such priest cry, Alas, alas, that no good spirit dwelt with me at my coming into God's Church!" He then goes on to censure the exactions and usurpations of the Pope, and to denounce the greed of Holy Church; the tract is directed solely against the Pope and the Hierarchy, with the Simoniacal Clergy. This tract is valuable as shewing that, even at that early period in his career, the mind of Wycliffe was opened to the corruptions found in the bosom of the Church. It is, however, but right to mention that his latest biographer, the Rev. W. W. Shirley,* throws doubt upon the authenticity of this tract, inasmuch as he says, "it has been attributed to him in the absence of all external, and in defiance of all internal, evidence." Let it be granted that the external evidence is at the best but doubtful, we must, however, demur to the other statement, for the tone of thought is that of Wycliffe. If the authorship be denied to him, this should, at least, be feasibly explained, and the real author indicated.

But what of the prophecy? We have already cited, in a previous paper, facts which shew that Wycliffe was not single in prophesying the end of the world; we might have named many more instances in which knaves or fools, ancient and modern, have prophesied the same thing; the distinction of Wycliffe lies in this, that he cannot be charged with being either; his prophecy was made in solemn earnestness, and, at that time, with some apparent foundation in reason. In truth, however, this idea of the world being near its end, that the "consummation of all things is at hand," which in this, even as in former ages seems to possess so strong a charm for some minds, is no less ridiculous than it is totally false, and sad withal. False, we say; the world is not old but young. Consider it well, that other doctrine is a sad one. Time waxing towards completion, and man not yet learnt to love his brother man. Eternity at hand, and the nations not yet able to worship God aright. Man's probation ended, and the day of truth and justice not yet arrived. No future for humanity, and the past all spent in mere strivings after what may be. Man's career of greatness cut short, now that it is only beginning. All the struggles that have been made, all the sufferings that have been endured, all the mighty self-sacrifice, all the noble work of the past, all, all, in vain. Alas! for us, what can be sadder to contemplate?

Believe it not, brother! the earth is only in its infancy, there is work yet for the human race to do, there is a perfection not yet attained, which has to be won; let not your faith be lessened, your strong right arm paralyzed, as it must be if this belief is to take possession of your soul that, ere long, all will be finished, and human energy, human aspirations, all of no avail. Half, or more than half, of the human race are barbarian still; is their day of great things never to arrive? Science has but disclosed a few of the infinite series of Nature's mysteries; is man never to know the whole of God's truth? Are we to exchange the glorious hope of working out our salvation from human tyrannies, of freeing our souls from the bondage of false creeds and spiritual despotism, for the silly dreams of visionaries; and cease our endeavours to establish truth and justice among men, in order that we may

* See his Introduction to the work edited by him for the Treasury Commissioners, "*Fasciculi Zizaniorum Magistri Johannis Wyclif, cum Trifido*,"

place faith in the lying tales of prophecymongers and Apocalyptic sketchers? God forbid! All true men will scout the teaching and the teachers, and manfully set themselves to the task of making the future nobler and better than the past has been.

The age of Wycliffe, however, was one in which, looking at its moral and religious aspects, a man might be excused for believing that progress was impossible, and that the only way to cure the existent evils would be to make a clean sweep of humanity as it was, in order to make room for the "Reign of the Saints." Chaucer has painted the age for us in colours that will never fade; we have only to look into his pages to find the religious, moral, and social state of the fourteenth century. In his "Canterbury Tales" may be read both the objective and subjective side of that age, when faith in the old was dying out, and the new had not yet taken its place; when chivalry had been baptized into the Church, and the brutal propensities of that semi-savage time thus had the sanction of religion, while "Our Lady" had become the real deity of Christendom; and when monk and friar met to laugh at the superstition they called religion; and men in general used religion as a means to gratify their lusts or minister to their pleasures, and sought only by its aid to lull their conscientious scruples.

JAS. L. GOODING.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 8.—SAKYA AND HIS DOCTRINAL SYSTEM.

THE foregoing is a very faithful summary of the moral teaching of Sakya and, with that before us, we may now with safety turn to the cosmological and doctrinal portions. And first, it is curious to learn their ideas regarding how the world was peopled. Of its creation, not knowing, they do not say much. We are informed in the Sacred Books, and it seems to be true, that the world has always existed—that there are Kalpas or lengthened ages, millions of years in each, during which the world is peopled, then comes a Kalpa, age of destruction, when all things are blotted out. To effect that object, extra suns are added to the existing system, and they shine with such intense glory, and pour out so much heat that the whole earth is consumed; then comes water and frost, and all visible things are bound up in the icy chain. When the existing races commenced their existence, it seems "that the earth 'was dark and void,' and Brahma descended giving glorious light from his own person. Through this "advent of heavenly light" the earth assumed a smiling face, again flowers bloomed in rich luxuriance, and the appearance of all things was most inviting. At this time sundry of the happy Brahmin spirits, dwelling in the many places of happiness, were attracted by the beauty of the fresh green earth, and one by one they descended to pluck the flowers and luxuriate amid the balmy odours. By-and-bye they regularly visited it, and the crust was changed to honey. One day "these blessed spirits tasted "the sweet thing," and that taste lost them the power of returning to their spirit homes. To eat of the earthy was to become of the earth. Now darkness fell upon all, and they knew not how to live, for behold! the taste of mortal earth had made themselves mortal. But, as in mercy to them, the sun was poised high in heaven to give them light and warmth, and thus their lives were rendered bearable. From these imprisoned spirits proceeded all

the races and existing inhabitants of the earth. To them also sin came, first in the form of falsehood, which even now is esteemed the most terrible. By and by, they separated into classes, and some holier than others, became purer Brahmins—hence the Brahmin class. Then came the Buddhas, or holiest of all. These are rare: some Kalpas cannot boast a single Buddha—others boast of six or seven. The present Kalpa has already had four, and one more will appear before the final consummation of all things. For this Buddha, the Tartars, Siamese, and others are even now anxiously looking.

Entering the Buddhist system of philosophy, we find that they hold a triune faith; Buddha, Dharma, Sanga, or Intelligence, Law, and Church (human unity), and when spoken of in a philosophical sense, these terms mean, Wisdom of the Master, Power of Mind, Cohesion of Matter. But all is eventually resolved into one, so that here, as in all other schemes, the One or Absolute Unity, reigns over and pervades all. Some have held that the Buddhists have no idea of God, and if this be said to convey the idea that they know not His ways in all minuteness, then its truth must be acknowledged; but if it be meant, as is usually the case when the missionaries are speaking upon the point, to convey the idea that they have no idea of any superior Intelligence, then it is a sad libel upon the whole of their faith and writings.

They believe in heaven or heavens. Indeed, the idea already given of the beginning of our race, involves such a belief, for the pious ones came down from above. Moreover, according to their system, there are sixteen heavens, or places of blessedness. All these heavens are as stages, through which men must pass in order to attain the highest. The Buddhist never tells you that, although you may have robbed and murdered, lied and borne false-witness, —although you have led a most miserable life, labouring for money, place, power, and worldly honours, and labouring to attain them without paying any respect to justice, mercy, or truth, —although you have sullied your soul with every crime, still, and at the last hour, by merely believing something a priest reads out of a book, you can be at once rendered pure as the purest, holy as the holiest, and equally God's favourite with the noblest martyrs and the most virtuous who have lived. With all his weaknesses and idle dreams, the Buddhist has never yet so strangely contradicted reason or sullied the idea of Divine Justice. He has left this for the Christian Dogmatists, and has gone on teaching that, according as a man acts during life, so will he be placed when he passes into another state of Being. He may act so well as to pass at once to the highest heaven, or only so as to the lowest of the sixteen. He may enter a mediate heaven, but whichever he enters he is not bound for ever there, but may, and must go on toward the very highest, or, indeed, must fall again into a lower, for to stand still is the only impossibility.

The highest heaven, the topmost round in this ladder of progress is Nirwana, and from this there is no exit. But about this state of Being or non-being, there is great difference of opinion. What is it? Is it annihilation, the blotting out of all sensation? This is declared by many eminent Oriental scholars, but as many, and equally eminent, declare the contrary, and hence it is both hard and imprudent to decide. The highest state of blessedness, freedom from all excitement, care, and active pleasure, is what the Buddhist means by Nirwana, and certainly, seeing that he believes that all the Buddhas dwell in Nirwana, it is hard to conceive the meaning to be that all have passed out of existence. Of course, however, in deciding upon this matter, we must remember the climateric influences which operate upon the

people, and, guided by this, we can then conceive their Nirwana to be something nobler than annihilation.

To illustrate this, we ask the reader, Have you ever gone out in the hottest portion of our seasons to spend a few hours lying beneath the trees? There stretches out before and around you much to glad the eye and gratify the heart, but not upon these would you now dwell, but upon the book you have brought as a companion. Be it so; and yet you do not read, for in a few moments your book-companion lies by your side. You cannot read, cannot bend the mind sufficiently to comprehend the thought of the author, so you will just lie back and close your eyes to what lives and moves around. Now you are in a dream-land—and what glorious fancies chase each other through the brain! There is no labour of thought, no trial, but all things seem, and are, without any effort upon our parts. This is an earthly taste of Nirwana, there is life and being, with thought and feeling, but no action, and surely it is uncandid to say that because men believe in this they believe not in being at all.

Many who have written upon this subject have presupposed the Atheism, and then have misrepresented the meaning of Sakya, in order to establish that it was his doctrine; yet, either we must believe he contradicted himself throughout, or that his state of rest must mean union with a still continuing conscious spirit. Prialux says of Sakya, that "he called his disciples to the "worship of no abstract God, but of his own living person, or its carved or "painted image."* This, however, is totally to misconceive his doctrines, both in relation to the present and the future. Elsewhere he says, "Though "Brahminism, proceeding from God, arrives at our world but by a fiction, "and Buddhism, proceeding from our world, either never arrives at God at "all, or at best but simulates the dim shadow of a God, yet in the objects "they would attain, as freedom from transmigration, both these religious "greatly resemble each other."† This is but saying that Buddhism is Atheistic, and simply because it fails to define its God. May we not say the same of the Christian religion if we insist upon having all our ideas fitly represented by objective realities? "Who by searching can find out God?" asks the Hebrew poet, and he has never been answered but by uncertain sounds. Sakya evidently did not feel himself at liberty to pretend to know that of which he knew nothing. He predicated a spirit eternally existing, but of its condition he would not speak, and how much nearer to real knowledge are they who pursue the contrary course? The wisest can but simulate the dim shadow of God, and yet are profoundly convinced of the existence of a Superintending Intelligence; they are constrained to say it is, but in what form, and what the nature, we know not.

Sakya, however, had advanced one step beyond declaring the existence; he went so far as to say that the Superior Intelligence found blessedness within Himself when in a state of rest. He did not believe in a Superintending Providence, and probably it is because of that he has been so strangely misconceived by Christian writers, who seem to be agreed about his Atheism. In a course of lectures delivered before the students of St. Augustine's Missionary College, Canterbury, the lecturer (Rev. Peter Percival) said:—

"It is probable that both the systems of Brahma and of Buddha had a "common origin, the former having the precedence in the order of time. "The extravagant Pantheism of the Brahmanical schools of philosophy seems "to have created a reaction in certain minds, which resulted in the Buddhis-

* *Questions Mosaicæ*, p. 475, 2nd edit.

† *Ibid.*, p. 477.

"tic theory. The Pantheist taught that there is only one sole, self-existing being—God; that all things are God. The revulsion of mind from this extraordinary doctrine produced the denial of the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, and the persuasion that no such being as God exists at all. Thus Pantheism was met by the opposite extreme of Atheism. The Brahmanical theory resolves all things into spirit, to the exclusion of matter, whose existence he denies; and the Buddhistic theory resolves all things into matter, to the exclusion of spirit, whose being it ignores."*

This was addressed to young men who are going to India and elsewhere, where they expect to convert members of the Buddhist Churches, but with what chance of success it is not hard to surmise. The late Chevalier Bunsen, with that thorough earnestness which guided him in all his inquiries, plunged into this inquiry, and issued out of it with quite a different impression to that which is common.† He spurned the ordinary libel, and established conclusively enough that however Sakya may have erred, that error was not to be added to the number.

Neander, too, with his usual acuteness, perceived the fallacy of the common theory. He says:—

"We cannot help considering Buddhism (although this view has been denied by many in modern times) as one phenomenal phase of Pantheism; as indeed we must regard in this light every doctrine which does not recognise God as a self-conscious Cause of Existence, acting freely and with design. The Dualism of Buddhism is of quite a different kind from that of Parsism. It is not a positive kingdom of evil that in it stands opposed to the kingdom of good, and with a corrupting influence insinuates itself into the creation of the latter. But it means by Dualism, nothing else than that the Divine Being is under the necessity of passing out of Itself into manifestation; and the problem then arises, how from this manifestation It is to revert to pure Being. Of this form of Dualism, in its connection with the pantheistic element, the same may be said as was said of the apparent Neo-Platonic Dualism, described in a former part of this work. There are two factors in it—the Spirit or God, and Nature or Matter. When the Spirit passes out of itself into Nature, then there comes into existence the phenomenal world, the world of appearance, of Sansara—the Maia. The Spirit becomes more and more numbed in nature, more completely estranged from itself, even to entire unconsciousness. In man it has to pass through various stages of development and purification again before it can be wholly released from the constraining bonds of Nature. Then, being stripped of all limited, individual existence, it becomes conscious of its oneness with the primal Spirit, from which all life has flowed, and thereupon passes into it. This is to become Nirwana."‡

This is Pantheism—is its most intelligent form; and, in justice to Sakya, we must concede that he was not to be expected to express himself in such perfect language as that which is employed by modern philosophers. There is not the slightest reason why we should demand from him a clearness of utterance which must surpass all other writings. This we say philosophically; but the Christian also is bound to concede it, because even Paul could not express himself so clearly as to avoid confusion. And when Jesus said "God is a Spirit," he did not enlighten our darkness so much as men imagined. The question still remains, What is Spirit?

P. W. P.

* The Land of the Veda, p. 358.

† See his Hippolytus and his Age.

‡ Neander, Hist. Christ. Church, vol. ii. p. 160.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE "SONG OF SOLOMON."

(Concluded from page 320.)

SUCH, then, is the "Song of Solomon," and, when read in this, its natural, light, it is peculiarly valuable. As a love-poem of the East, too, it does not stand alone, for there are several Indian poems of precisely the same character. There is one, called the "Gitagovinda," with which Dr. Adam Clarke was so struck that he inserted a version at the end of his translation of Solomon's Song. This poem, is in its spirit, form, and structure, precisely the same, and Dr. Clarke very correctly suggested that it could "be used to illustrate and explain the Canticles with great advantage." Many of the ideas and illustrations, many of the turns of thought and even minor features, are the same in both, and it has been suggested that one must have been copied from the other. This is to say more than is justified by either the actual wording, or the genius of the two languages. Indeed it is almost absurd to suppose it, for it would have been wholly impossible to have got rid of the marked peculiarities of each in a translation or adaptation. The Indian poem, from beginning to end, is full of allusions to individuals or ideas incorporated with the Indian mythology, and it is very properly treated as religiously mystical. But religion does not appear in the Song of Songs—there is the human love and passion, but no links by which the human is connected with the Divine. Persian poetry is abundant in which the same characteristics are seen. Some of their writers have composed poems which, in point of literary merit, as greatly transcend this Song of Songs, as the poetry and dramatic skill of Shakspeare surpass those of Nahum Tate. Still they are not fitted for our colder clime. The children of the East can read them without being influenced in the same manner that we are. Englishmen are practical, and, as they have a place for everything, so they have a definite meaning for their words. When used, their value is known all through the land. He who uses voluptuous imagery and language is known simply as a voluptuous man, as one who dwells upon the sensual side of things; and nothing said to the contrary would serve to convince Englishmen it was not the case. Goethe lost ground with Englishmen because of the voluptuous form into which he cast the incidents of "Wilhelm Meister," neither do I decry the criticism. But, if we carry our ideas of propriety so far as to estimate all Eastern writings by this, not only shall we lose the good they are capable of giving us, but we shall grossly misjudge the people who delight in their perusal. The Eastern can read such works, not only without degradation, but without their suggesting to his mind the ideas they suggest to the Western mind. All Eastern poetry is warm; not passionate or strong in its emotional life, but warm, luscious, voluptuous, yet, in a refined sense, acute and intellectual. Thus this Song of Songs could be read in the East before a crowd by a young maiden without any idea of impropriety, but it is impossible to say that it could be done in England, for even they who believe in the spiritual interpretation would be startled by many of the passages.

But, treating the poem in this way, as a simple love poem, what can be said of its authorship or inspiration? They who wrote it never dreamt of such a question, and thus it cannot be answered save as we are guided by our common sense, which goes clearly enough against the idea of God being the author of such poetry. Here is the opening of a poem, given by Lane, of the same class, but superior in structure and style:—

"Oh gazelle from among the gazelles of El-Yem'en!
I am thy slave without cost;
O thou small of age, and fresh of skin!
O thou who art scarce past the time of drinking milk!"

Is it not impossible to point out imagery in the Song which surpasses this? The Western mind cannot be satisfied with it, and, indeed, sees very little to admire in such similes, but the Arab who dwells upon the desert listens to such compositions

with a feeling of delight that surpasses the admiration felt and expressed by Englishmen, even when the wonderful poetry of Shakspeare is the subject of reading. Here is another specimen, furnished by Lane:—

<p>I. "With love my heart is troubled, And mine eyelid hindereth sleep: My vitals are dissevered, While with streaming tears I weep; My union seems far distant, Will my love e'er meet mine eye? Alas! did not estrangement Draw my tears I would not sigh.</p>	<p>III. O, turtle dove! acquaint me Wherefore thus dost thou lament. Art thou so stung by absence?— Of thy wings deprived, and pent? He saith, 'Our griefs are equal; Worn away with love I lie.' Alas! did not estrangement Draw my tears I would not sigh.</p>
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<p>II. By dreary nights I'm wasted, Absence makes my hopes expire; My tears, like pearls, are dropping, And my heart is wrapt in fire. Whose is like my condition? Scarcely know I remedy. Alas! did not estrangement Draw my tears I would not sigh.</p>	<p>IV. O, First and Everlasting! Shew thy favour yet to me; Thy slave, Ahh'mad-El-Bekree, Hath no Lord excepting thee. By Ta-Ha, the great prophet, Do thou not his wish deny. Alas! did not estrangement Draw my tears I would not sigh."</p>
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There is the ring of true metal in some of those lines, which cannot be said of those in the Song of Songs. Lane gives another, of which the following is the close.

"The phantom of thy form visited me in my slumber.
 I said, 'O, phantom of slumber! who sent thee?'
 He said, 'He sent me who thou knowest;
 He whose love occupies thee!'
 The beloved of my heart visited me in the darkness of night;
 I stood, to show him honour, until he sat down.
 I said, 'O, thou my petition and all my desire,
 Hast thou come at midnight and not feared the watchmen?'
 He said to me, 'I feared, but, however, love
 Had taken from me my soul and my breath.'"

Shall we take these and speak of them as churchmen do of the Song, as allegorising Christ's love for the Church? The wildest idea that ever entered mortal heads cannot be wilder than that. For instance, how can any reasonable man read the following, and say it is such language as Christ would address to the Church?—

"How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O noble maiden!
 The circuits of thy thighs like ornaments,
 The work of a master's hand.
 Thy navel is like a round goblet,
 Let not spiced wine be wanted in it.
 Thy body is like a heap of wheat,
 Hedged round with lilies.
 Thy bosom is like two young fawns,
 Twins of a gazelle.
 Thy neck is like an ivory tower,
 Thine eyes are as the pools in Heshbon,
 By the populous gate;
 Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon,
 Looking toward Damascus.
 Thy head upon thee as purple,
 And the tresses of thy head as crimson.
 The king is captivated by the ringlets:
 How beautiful and how charming,
 O love, in thy fascination!
 This, thy growth, is like a palm-tree,
 And thy bosom like its clusters.

I long to climb this palm-tree,
 I long to clasp its branches.
 May thy bosom be unto me
 As the clusters of the vine,
 And the odour of thy breath
 As that of apples."

This has been correctly called "the language of seduction," and surely is not to be spoken of as a beautiful sacred allegory of Christ and his people!

There is much finer poetry than this which could be used for Christian purposes—that is made, without so much straining, to yield Christian meanings. I can at present furnish but one specimen, from the Persian of Hafiz:—

"This earthly mist conceals th' eternal mind;
 Oh happy day that shall the veil remove!
 My soul, like Philomel, in cage confined,
 Pants for her native soil—th' Elysian grove.
 Yet whence came I? and whither shall I go?
 Ah! why unknown my being's care supreme?
 While thus combined with senseless earth below,
 How shall I scan of heaven the boundless theme?
 If tears and sighs betray my heart's desire,
 'Tis that, like musk, it cannot rest concealed:
 With nymphs angelic I to dwell aspire,
 How can I then to wine my senses yield?
 Though vestments rich with gold my limbs array,
 My breast conceals a fierce devouring flame.
 O come, and Hafiz' being bear away;
 Absorbed in thee shall vanish ev'n his name."

And yet I would not say this poem is not sacred; although, of course, I attach a much wider meaning to that word than is commonly done. To me all truth and beauty, all nobility and earnestness, all sacrifice and virtues, are sacred. And when a writer has embalmed the memory of a noble life, a pure love, or a noble deed, in fitting language, I hold the whole to be as sacred as any other writing, whether of Hebrew or Christian worlds. The modern idea of sacredness is calculated to blot from our souls all lofty veneration, and all religious respect for the lives and works of earth's greatest men. That idea enshrines only the doings and writings of a particular people or class of men, and such a notion is as fatal to our progress as the idea of sacred days, sacred robes, or sacred places is fatal to all healthy religious development. For what day can possibly possess any inherent sanctity? Are not all days woven in the same loom of Time, from the warp and woof of Eternity? Thus to-day comes up black and cloudy, chill and cold, and to-morrow shall be light and clear, dry and warm, without respect to the hours. This day life and death are heralded the same as on any other. Neither of them pause in their career, but go on ever melting the one into the other, without respect to the minutes as they pass. Man, in his weakness, says, we must have some days which shall be esteemed as particularly good—intrinsically sacred; and upon those days he must not do what on other days may be done without reserve. So that as yet he conceives only of a partial goodness. Not ever good—but good particularly—good on particular days. Upon those days he will tread a marked line, and will not either play himself or allow his children the use of their toys. And, poor man, he does not see that his goodness is unreal and only mechanical—does not see that it lacks the spontaneity which lies at the base of all real goodness. So in dealing with poetry he does not yet perceive that all noble works and poems are sacred in a much higher sense than he conceives of Biblical inspiration. There are many passages of Shakspeare's which, in every good quality, transcend all that there is in this Song, or anything else which bears the name of Solomon.

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OUT OF THE CLOUD;

OR, AN ENGLISH RECTOR IN SEARCH OF A CREED.

A TALE; BY P. W. P.



CHAPTER II.

THE CHAMBER OF DEATH.

THE chamber in which Mrs. Lester lay was a commodious one, but it could not be inspected without filling the beholder with surprise; it looked more like a museum than a lady's sleeping apartment. On its walls were hung, in strange confusion, a variety of objects of all ages, countries, and qualities. There were the wreathed horns of the antelope, tusks of the wild boar, the skin of a Bengal tiger, ostrich eggs, the dorsal fin of a shark, the horns of a bison, and fine geological specimens of the foot-prints of the earliest Saurians. There were curious pictures from China, silken cords from the banks of the Ganges, feather work of the ancient Mexicans, and fragments of hieratic papyri collected from Egyptian tombs. Between the parts of this incongruous collection, might be seen various specimens of tropical birds, whose plumage was as richly tinted as their tiny bodies were gracefully moulded. Above, below, and around, there hung or rested upon light brackets a still more miscellaneous assortment of curiosities, geological, artistic, archæological, or classical; all of which had been collected by Colonel Lester, when, either in the service of the State as a soldier, commissioner or secret agent, or seeking his own pleasure, he had been travelling in distant lands. It was his rule never to quit any remarkable place without obtaining something both portable and enduring which could be preserved as a memorial of his visit. And it seemed to have been viewed as a matter of trifling consequence what he carried away; nothing came amiss, whether statuary, porcelain, fragments of a rock, or only leaves from a tree; and he was as proud of one object as of another. Thus, there were Burmese ivory and clay images of Gaudama; miniature seals from the rock-cut temples of Western India; a coin from Phœnicia; stamped bricks from the Birs-i-Nimrud; a stone ear ruthlessly chipped off a piece of sculpture at Persepolis; a fragment of pottery from Memphis; a small cedar branch from the Lebanon; water in a bottle from the Jordan; a marble

finger from the Acropolis; a spear head from Mount Tageytus; a bronze fragment from the Campania, with many other warlike and artistic remains from Classic, Sacred, and Barbarian lands. Nor were the countries of Europe omitted, for Celtic and Saxon fragments found a place on the walls of this strangely furnished sleeping apartment. But what added to the oddity of the scene was the fact, that the various objects were distributed not with a view to their effect as a whole, but in the order of their collection. Beginning at the door, they were arranged round the room in the order of the Colonel's travels; and thus, as he was in the habit of boasting to his friends, the entire story of his life and its incidents hung upon the walls of his bedroom. Yet, when the first feeling of surprise had been conquered, there was something pleasing in the general impression produced by this medley; for accident, or the necessity of avoiding bulky objects, had so favoured the collection as to exclude everything likely, either by its form or proportions, to offend the laws of taste. To those who were now assembled within the room, all the objects had a peculiar value not estimable in the open market; and had some dealer in curiosities been called in to appraise their value, the owners would have been astonished at the low price he would have put upon them.

The bedstead and its furniture were Anglo-Indian, and the rich damask curtains, now drawn back and festooned, served to throw out into bolder relief the still beautiful form of the dying mother. There was no anxious or fear-wrought expression upon her fine open countenance; neither had disease destroyed the rounded fulness of her face, which was one of those peculiar to the true English stock of mothers and daughters. She wore that sort of expression which indicates calmness and resignation; it was strong but humble; affectionate and full of tenderness. The brow was neither broad nor lofty, nor did it furnish those which the phrenologist speaks of as "indications of great intellectual power," yet it was impossible to look upon the entire face without feeling that urbanity and a noble sympathy, good sound sense, and great firmness of purpose were well combined in the character of its owner.

The Doctor and Lester had entered the room very quietly, but in an instant the mother's eyes filled with tears as they alighted upon her son; she exhibited, however, no stronger signs of emotion. Raising the one arm she could still use (the other was hopelessly paralysed), she enfolded his neck as he bent over to kiss her. Several minutes passed, during which nor sound nor motion broke through the prevailing stillness; then she relaxed her hold, pushed him a little back, so that once more, with the light from a lamp falling full upon his face, she could see all its features, and smiled a content she was incapable of otherwise expressing. Lester sank upon his knees beside the bed, and in an instant her hand was laid upon his head. As in other days, she ran her fingers through his rich black hair, and while the strong feeling of pride was in her heart, the silence was broken by her saying, "Just like my dear departed Lester, when first we met upon the Welsh mountains." Pleasant memories of departed days came trooping back to her mind, shedding their air of love and tenderness over her last hours, even as the descending sun flashes back upon the mountains beams of light after he has long sunk below the horizon.

Lester still knelt, and the loving fingers continued to be twined among the glossy curls; but after a long pause her voice again broke the silence. "The evening has come," she said, "but much sooner than I expected it. I have prayed for it, and now that I am called I must go to rejoin him who

was the pride of my heart. I have seen him in my dreams, and last night I heard him call 'Ella, dear Ella!' as clearly as ever he called. I am going, not to the dark pit, but to the real world of life. Years ago I feared death very much, but I don't fear it now; it used to seem to me as if it must be cold and terrible, now I feel it to be warm and glorious. Your dear father often told me that our earthly existence is but a dream, out of which we awaken in the hour of death; and I never understood how it could be so, but now I feel and know that it is true. I have lain here and seen all my life through as in a minute, and yet every part was clearer to me than it had been before; so it is with the future, for I feel to know all about its sensations, and am sure that it will be grander and nobler than anything here below."

Doctor Moule had been so frequently present at closing scenes, that he was not surprised to hear the dying woman speak again with all her original power; the others, when her voice rang out with its old strength, and nearly all its musical power, flattered themselves that she would recover; but he knew too well the nature of the symptoms to be at all deceived by this, as they were.

"Yes," said she, "I shall leave you here below, and I am glad to go to him, although I should be glad to stay with you. But do not grieve when I am gone; and remember, that we shall all meet again in the great Hereafter. I shall go away, but my love will not leave me; it will grow all the stronger for the separation. Death cannot sunder our spirits, and it is powerless to weaken our affection. Think of me when I am gone, and if I can I will watch your footsteps as I used to do. Heaven will be far more blessed to me if I can bend in spirit down upon my dear orphaned children. You will be left alone, but my heart tells me that you will still love one another. Study to be innocent, my children, and the good God will bring us all together again. Be true and upright, and endeavour to come to us with clean hands and upright hearts, and then blessedness, like a radiant angel, will come with you."

The tone in which this was uttered had something of the supernatural about it; and when the voice ceased, the listeners felt as they do who, when the stars are out, and the bustle of life is buried in the nightly calm of nature, have heard soft strains wafted o'er the water, which ceased as suddenly as they began to stir the senses. But the succeeding silence was of brief duration, for presently she spake again.

"George," said she, "before I go I wish you would promise me that you will enter the Church and become a minister."

Unconsciously, and before the whole of these words had been uttered, he rose from his kneeling attitude, and started like one astonished, but still he spake not.

Moved by his silence, she continued—"For years past, although this never escaped my lips, the idea has been in my mind, and I hoped that while you were at college you would make choice of the ministry. Now that I am dying, I cannot any longer be silent about my wishes. Promise me, my child, that you will enter the Church, and I shall die in peace."

Lester had always been an obedient son—his mother's request had always stood as an absolute law; yet now, and when it was to have been least expected, he hesitated and held his peace. Evidently he did so, because of feeling the vast importance of the answer. He stood looking upon the face of his mother, waiting to hear other words, and looking like one who feared to answer "Yes," but who equally feared to answer "No." His wishes

had never run in that direction; and had they done so, it is probable that, being strictly conscientious, what he had heard and seen at Oxford would have operated strongly to wean them away. He had, however, no aversion to the Church; on the contrary, he had never doubted its sacred character; still he had no desire to enter the ministry. The fact is, that, as yet, he had not decided upon his profession. If any idea of the future had ever held possession of his mind, it had been in favour of some calling which would have involved foreign travel; and around the room the objects were ranged which had operated upon him to create that desire. Still he had no definite idea of the capacity in which he should seek to gratify his wishes, unless as a tutor; and now that entrance into the Church was forced upon him, he felt equally desirous of giving and of refusing the solicited promise.

Almost instinctively Mrs. Lester perceived his reluctance, though, from a foregone conclusion of her own, she interpreted it wrongly. This, however, operated to render her all the more anxious to obtain his promise. An expression of alarm gathered upon her countenance, which speedily gave way to that of a steady determination to achieve her purpose; for, speaking with a degree of startling energy, she said, "It is the last request of a fond mother to her dearly beloved child, and that child will not, dare not, refuse the prayer of the petition."

Still Lester spoke not, but, looking full of grief, appeared as if anxious to hear all she would say before venturing upon uttering a word for himself.

"Through long years," she resumed, "years of sickness and trouble, I watched over you, and George, my child, you have had too many proofs of my love to want me now to show that I have good cause for what I ask. . . . I have strong reasons, stronger than you can ever know. . . . I know that your only hope of safety, both here and hereafter, lies in granting and fulfilling my request." And here, as if moved by some deep emotion of soul, she solemnly added, "I wish to meet you again, with all my dear ones, I wish to give you back to your father. . . . It is my love compels me to ask your consent."

None who were present could understand how it was that Lester allowed her to speak so much before giving any mark of his assenting to her proposal, neither could he understand it. He said afterwards that he felt as if all power of utterance was gone; and that, although before she began her second appeal he had resolved upon consenting, he was unable to express his intentions. But when the last touching appeal closed he was free again to speak as a faithful son.

"Yes, mother, I shall do what you request. I know you wish wisely, I know your affectionate care, and if it will make you happy, then I solemnly promise to do my best to become a clergyman; and if I should succeed I will labour my utmost honourably, and to their farthest limits, to perform the duties of my station."

The words were hardly spoken before their effect was visible upon Mrs. Lester, a glow of heartfelt satisfaction was diffused over her countenance, pleasure was in every feature, and what many would term a supernatural charm was lent to her appearance. For some minutes it appeared as if amid the tumult of sudden joy her spirit had taken its flight, but after a short time a tinge of colour came back to her cheek, and she endeavoured to make her son comprehend why she had so anxiously pressed this point. From the broken narrative, frequently interrupted as it was by her inability to complete her sentences, it appeared that, while yet a mere child, Lester had exhibited a

degree of curiosity which was considered unusual. This made him to be a very troublesome child, for he would never sit quiet on the stool, but was eternally prying into matters with which he had nothing to do, and asking questions about subjects which he could not and should not understand. His curiosity, however, was not of the idle, but of the practical kind; and when he wished to have any subject explained, he persisted in his enquiries until he was reasonably satisfied. To tell him that the matter about which he enquired was one which he could not comprehend, was merely to give an edge to his appetite, and to sharpen his desire for information; peace was utterly out of the question until he had been answered. And what was particularly remarkable about him was the fact that he never said "Yes! yes! I see," unless he really did understand what was said. If he was taken through a factory or over any large works, he would stand for an hour "hail fellow well met!" with the dirtiest engine boy on the establishment, in order to get the explanation he desired about the action of some part of the machinery. This intense curiosity, as his mother called it, had alarmed her, and she concluded that, when grown to be a man, through desiring to learn all about the nature and cause of things, he would become a sceptic, or even, as she phrased it, "a disbeliever in all subjects connected with the Scripture religion."

"Through the closeness of his enquiries, and his restlessness to discover the truth," said she, "your dear father was led to deny . . ."

Here an involuntary shudder, as of some painful associations, ran through her frame, and suspended her speech. Doctor Moule, who seemed thoroughly to divine the cause, gently laid his hand upon her arm saying, "Not now! not now! Touch not the old wounds; they have all been healed, and must not be made to bleed afresh."

Both George and Ella looked surprised, but Mrs. Lester thanked him for the kindly warning, and then fell back into herself, as if feeling that he had wisely exercised his prohibitory authority.

When she again spake it was to say, "It is best as it is; best unmentioned, for God has given him perfect rest. . . . But, my son, it was my fears for your eternal safety which made me so earnest; once in the Church, I knew you would be safe; and now that you have promised me that, I shall die in peace."

Here a slight rustle drew her attention to the opposite side of the bed, and, knowing who was standing there, she gently said, "Come, my child, Mary, come round." Mary came round and stood beside George. For a few moments Mrs. Lester lay silently contemplating the youthful couple. At length she said, "You know what I wish about your future course. Let it be as you have both promised, and may God from heaven bless you both. But, Mary, remember your solemn promise, and keep it."

The young girl crimsoned when George took her hand, and said, "Your lightest wish, dear mother, is our mutual blessing;" but evidently that which was suggested, both by word and act, was in perfect harmony with what Mary herself desired.

Jane here moistened the lips of Mrs. Lester, and whispered into her ear, "They will be my children now, and I shall never leave them. Till I die, I shall be where Master George and Miss Ella are, I must."

The coming of death destroys all distinctions, and the proudest monarch would be pleased to hear the oath of loyal fealty to his son taken by the poorest peasant. The dying woman was gratified beyond expression; yet, had Jane remained silent, her mistress would have been quite as certain about

the course she would pursue. Long years of faithful service had converted her into the servant-friend of the family, and when any difficulty arose, it was impossible to decide it without consulting "Nurse Jane." Thus, when she said she would never leave them, Mrs. Lester knew they would have a true friend, who, although odd in some of her ways and speeches, was honest, plain-spoken, and affectionate.

Ella leant over the bed to catch words intended for her ear alone; and while she listened, the mother's eye of love and tenderness beamed a meaning which language cannot express, but which was perfectly comprehended by the listener. But that look, and the thoughts it expressed, seemed to have exhausted her more than the previous speaking had done. Dr. Moule was of opinion that they exhaust themselves the most who never give utterance to their deeper thoughts; and that when the mind can call the physical organism into play to express its thoughts and emotions, the patient does not suffer such prostration as when utterance is denied.

A complete silence prevailed, during which, glancing at the objects hanging upon the walls, she seemed to be recalling, one by one, the stirring scenes in the life of her husband, exactly as he, by frequent recitals, had imprinted them upon her mind. Occasionally, yet faintly, she uttered words which indicated the course of her thoughts. Smiles passed over her face when many scenes were recalled, but a visible shudder shook her frame when her eye fell upon the fragment of a spar upon which Colonel Lester had floated two days, after being wrecked on the North American coast; and when she cried out, "Saved! he is saved!" there was so much of emotion, of frantic tenderness in her voice, that it sent the blood quicker through every heart in the room.

In one corner of the apartment there stood a chamber organ, which Colonel Lester had worked at until success had crowned his efforts in making it, through some clock-work mechanism, to play any tune, to which it was set, precisely at the time at which the hand upon the dial had been pointed. It was part of Jane's daily duty to wind it up, and although the accident had happened, she mechanically did so on the morning of this day; but without changing the hand, which pointed to One, or disconnecting the machinery. In its ordinary course the clock-work moved down, and as it was now one o'clock, the instrument began as usual to play its music, which happened to be the "*Venite Adoramus*." All started when the sound broke upon their ears, and each seemed to feel that it should be stopped; but the dying woman smiled her satisfaction, and they allowed it to play on. It was the Colonel's favourite piece; and whether it were the old associations, the religious nature of the piece, or that the tone of the instrument was really superior to all others of its class, it would be hard to determine; but certainly the effect was overpoweringly solemn and almost sublime. When the music ceased, a silence prevailed which was so profound that it became an inarticulate voice to proclaim its own awful solemnity, and then Mrs. Lester, speaking quite strongly, said, "Yes! yes! his last words were, 'Ella, dear Ella, it is through the love of all things good and beautiful that the soul passes onward to its perfect peace and unity with God.'" From that moment an unbroken calmness was spread over her countenance; her lips, frequently moistened, gave forth no more either voice or sound; her eyes were now upraised as in benediction, now closed as in slumber. Slowly the minutes passed away, while each listener hoped to hear another word. Not as living beings, but as statues stood they all, nor knew they that death had been there, until Doctor Moule rose saying,—“Come, my orphaned ones, let us go to the rooms below.”

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XXII.

THE AGE OF WYCLIFFE.

IN Chaucer's Monk we have a type of the wealthy prelates of the age of Wycliffe; men whose only thought was the enjoyment of the wealth with which pious souls of old had endowed the various religious foundations. This monk was a great hunter, "full many a dainty horse had he in stable;" he was, moreover, a "fast man"—to adopt an expressive modern phrase—and, as the poet says, "let old things pace, and held after the new world the "trace;" and eke an accomplished sensualist. With all, however, he was a respectable specimen of the priestly class. It was among the Mendicant Friars that had gathered all the vices of the time; those of whom the song says, "no baron or squire or knight of the shire lives half so well as a holy "friar." Hypocrites and sensualists, they traded on the superstition of the people, and under the garb of religious mendicancy, lived in idleness and luxury. Chaucer's picture is full of humour and full of truth.

"A Frere there was, a wanton and a merry,
A limitour, a full solempne man.
Full sweetely he heard confession,
And pleasant was his absolution.
He was an easy man to give penance
There, as he wist to have a good pittance."

That is to say, he laid a premium on sin for his own aggrandisement. He was popular among the ignorant and the vicious, for he could sing a good song and play on the rote (hurdy-gurdy), and drink hard. He

"Knew well the tavernes in every town,
And every hosteler and gay tapstere."

Such was the ordinary mendicant of the 14th century; but about this time many of the mendicants added to their other qualifications that of "Pardoner," or Vender of Papal Indulgences. The selling of these was an abuse now becoming general throughout Christendom. These Indulgences were neither more nor less than licenses to sin, granted by the Pope for a consideration. We shall see hereafter how they became the proximate cause of the Lutheran Reformation. Even at this time there were good men who began to ask in reference to them, Can a shameful trade like this be Religion? Of course the result to the morals of the people was fearful. To this trade the Friars frequently added the sale of relics. They did, in fact, the dirty work of the Church. Chaucer's "Pardonere" is a striking picture of the time; although we recognise in the slights put upon him by the other pilgrims that there was a strong feeling against these agents of Rome. While in the scathing satire and the unsoftened exposure of all the vices of the clergy by Chaucer, we find plenty of evidence that a strong revulsion of feeling against the Church was among the undercurrents of society at this time; yet that a priesthood so thoroughly vicious could hold its own at all, betokens extensive ignorance and unbounded superstition.

Looking, then, at the pictures drawn by Chaucer, we cannot wonder that the feeling of the best men of the age was anti-sacerdotal; while on all hands the feeling against the Papacy, and on the part of the Crown and nobility also against the Hierarchy of the Church, had been growing strong and ever stronger; though it must be borne in mind that this was a political not a religious feeling. It is necessary that this distinction be kept in view,

in order that the subsequent events may be understood. The people were led by a patriotic feeling, as also were some of the nobility, to feel a hatred of the Papacy on account of the claim which it made to be the Suzerain of England. The transactions with John were remembered and never forgiven; the tribute which he had agreed to pay had been ever grudgingly discharged; it was a badge of servitude to which the free English spirit could but ill brook submission. Never regularly paid, it latterly was not paid at all, and the urgent demands of the Pope were never attended to. In any opposition to the temporal power of the Papacy over England, any man might depend on the support of people, nobility, and king, even while the belief in the spiritual authority of the Holy Father remained most profound. But the king and some of the higher nobility carried their antagonism much further than this, they looked with an evil eye upon the immense possessions of the clergy in general, and their attempts to interfere in temporal concerns. In looking at the vicissitudes of Wycliffe's career, we shall see these principles illustrated. It was not until after he had established himself as a papal opponent that he won the support of any large number of the English people to his opposition to the hierarchy. Nor was this anti-papal feeling one in which many of the clergy themselves did not share. Again, this same thing is illustrated in the history of the Mendicant Monks in England. While they remained true to their constitution, and even after they sought their own aggrandisement, they were respected, but when they appeared as the emissaries of the Pope, then their influence was gone.

The success of the English arms at Crécy and at Poitiers had raised this patriotic feeling to a height it had never reached before. And when Pope Urban thought fit to make a claim for the payment of the arrears of the tribute agreed to be paid by John (the same not having then been discharged for upwards of thirty-three years), the English were in no temper to comply, the more especially that the Popes were now entirely under the influence of France, having changed their residence from Rome to Avignon. The demand would have been resented in any case, but this fact rendered it certain that it would be rejected by all classes of Englishmen. The king referred the matter to his Council in the first instance. The opinions delivered by seven of the barons present have been preserved for us by Wycliffe; in them may be perceived the strong feeling of which we have spoken. "Our ancestors won this realm and held it against all foes by the sword. Julius Cæsar exacted tribute by force; let the Pope do the like. I, for one, am ready to stand up and resist him." So spoke the first. The second was more of a logician. "The Pope is incapable of such feudal supremacy. He should follow the example of Christ, who refused all civil dominion; the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air their nests, he had not where to lay his head. Let us rigidly hold the Pope to his spiritual duties, boldly oppose all his claims to civil power." "The Pope calls himself the Servant of the Servants of the Most High; his only claim to tribute from this realm is for some service done;" so the third speaker stated his case, "but," asked he, "what is his service to this realm? Not spiritual edification, but draining away money to enrich himself and his Court, showing favour and counsel to our enemies." This latter remark had reference to the Pope's connexion with the French. "The Pope claims," said the fourth, "to be the suzerain of all estates held by the Church; the estates held in mortmain amount to one-third of the realm."—The speaker would have been nearer the truth had he said one-half.—"There cannot be two suzerains; the Pope, therefore, for

"these estates is the king's vassal; he has not done homage for them; he 'may have incurred forfeiture.'" This baron was evidently intended for a lawyer. The fifth took another view, a legal one too, but derived, not from the civil, but from the canon law. "If the Pope demands this money," argued he, "as the price of King John's absolution, it is flagrant simony; 'it is an irreligious act to say, 'I will absolve you on payment of a certain 'annual tribute.' But the king pays not this tax," he indignantly adds, "it is wrung from the poor of the realm; to exact it is an act of avarice 'rather than salutary punishment.'" He concluded his argument with the forcible reminder that, "if the Pope be lord of the realm, he may at any time 'declare it forfeited, and grant away the forfeiture.'" The sixth said: "If 'the realm be the Pope's, what right had he to alienate it? He has fraudently sold it for not a fifth part of its value. Moreover, Christ alone is 'the suzerain; the Pope being fallible may be in mortal sin. It is better, as 'of old, to hold the realm immediately of Christ." The seventh: "John 'could not grant the realm away in his folly; the whole, the Royal Charter, 'signature and seal, is an absolute nullity." As chaplain to the king, the opinion of Wycliffe was sought before the matter was referred to Parliament, and he was commanded to answer the arguments of those who supported the Papal claims. It is in his answer that we have preserved the above arguments of the barons.

At the time this claim was made, and thus indignantly rejected, Wycliffe had become a somewhat celebrated man. His talents as a schoolman had distinguished him at the University, and obtained for him the title of the Evangelic Doctor; the fact of a distinctive title of this sort being given to him guarantees his scholastic eminence, while the form of such title was owing to his having restricted himself to lectures on the Scriptures, instead of on the Sentences, as they were called; being a text-book, comprising extracts from the Fathers, compiled by the celebrated schoolman, Peter the Lombard. He had already, too, broken a lance with the Mendicants on behalf of his University, they having sought to thrust themselves into the Professorial chairs at Oxford as elsewhere. This, from the fact that, as worshippers of the Pope, they had attained a bad notoriety with the English public, and also, by persuading the students to become Mendicants, had injured the University, parents objecting to send their children, had earned from the people, and also from the University, a grateful recognition of Wycliffe's services. It was doubtless the anti-papal spirit displayed by him in this controversy, as well as the notoriety he had gained, that had caused the King to appoint him one of his chaplains. The holding of this office, as also his well-known and strongly-expressed opinions against the right of the Pope to interfere in the temporal concerns of England, explain the fact, that Wycliffe was called in as adviser of the King and Parliament with reference to the papal claim.

It must not, however, be supposed that Wycliffe went any further in his views, as yet, than did many of his contemporaries, even in the ranks of the clergy; it was purely from a political and not a religious point of view that this matter was dealt with by him; though doubtless his hatred of the corruption in the Church was as strong at this time as ever. There were then within the Anglo-Catholic Church, as there are now, two parties, an Ultramontane and a liberal party—a party who looked upon the Pope as supreme in all things, and another who recognised his spiritual supremacy only. Wycliffe was the most distinguished man among the liberal party, and as such was looked upon as a fit adviser. The advice of Wycliffe, as might be

expected, coincided with the views of the king and barons, and when the matter came before the Parliament, they decided, with one voice, that the surrender of the realm by John was null and void, as having been done without the consent of Parliament, and in contravention of his coronation oath; thus they struck away the basis of the papal claim. The Ultramontane party among the clergy (so strong was the popular feeling) seem to have thought it well to acquiesce in this view, to say nothing of the fact that many even among them, in common with the other party, bore a grudge against the Pope for the frequent reservations of benefices made by him, to their detriment, and in favour of foreign ecclesiastics. Besides this question of tribute, there were other matters on which the English King and Parliament were at variance with the Pope. This question of papal provisions, for instance; this was the right which the Pope claimed to reserve to himself the next nomination to any benefice, in defiance of all others having the legal right to nominate. This had led to the large numbers of foreigners being installed into English benefices, who never performed the duties, but, living on the Continent, drew the revenues and spent them abroad. The English hate of foreigners was stronger than ever, and to the fact of there being so many foreigners among the hierarchy must be attributed much of the anti-sacerdotal feeling called forth a few years later by the works and sermons of Wycliffe. This question, however, was one which it was thought well to settle at once.

Now it may occur to some, that with the strong feeling expressed by the barons and the Parliament, the simplest and shortest course would have been to treat Urban and his claim, together with his threats, with supreme indifference. But no one who knows that age will wonder that Edward should think it necessary to go gently to work; for however strong, as Englishmen and Patriots, the men of the fourteenth century felt and resented the attempt at establishing a temporal jurisdiction, as religionists they were profoundly submissive to the spiritual power of the Pope. If, therefore, an abrupt refusal had been sent, the Pope might have exercised that spiritual power, and launched his Interdict. There were some doubtless who would have laughed at this (and perhaps Wycliffe was among the number), but the great body of the people would have been rendered wretched by being under the papal curse. It was policy therefore, no less than kindness towards these superstitious ones, which led the government to open negotiations with the Pope, not with Urban now (he had died in the midst of the controversy), but with Gregory XI. An embassy was accordingly despatched, consisting of seven persons, of whom Wycliffe was one. The result was a compromise, arrived at after a negotiation of two years' duration. "Owing, doubtless, to the mixing in it of their own 'selfish interests by one or two English bishops,'" says Neander, "it so happened that much less was accomplished than was intended at the outset."* Thus, as one of this embassy, Wycliffe was brought into close contact for two years and upwards with the Papal Court. Like Luther in a later age this did not tend to increase his respect for the Pope. He went a liberal Churchman, and came back a Reformer. He went respecting the spiritual papacy; he came back to call the Pope "the most cursed of clippers and purse-kervers," and other equally hard names.

JAS. L. GOODING.

* Church Hist. ix, p. 2.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 9.—SAKYA AND THE BUDDHIST HELLS.

IT is too readily assumed that when men say that God is a spirit, they remove all difficulties, and furnish a perfect definition, but, in truth, all they do is to give us words which do not assist us in our researches ; for we have still to ask,—What is a Spirit ? Many will be ready to answer, but they merely imagine the answer. Sakya did not do this, but spake practically, and when he taught the doctrine of Nirwana he had very distinct ideas in his mind of the condition it involved, as all can who will endeavour to realise his thoughts.

Here, however, it will be advisable to introduce one of the Buddhist hymns, as translated by Cosma de Korosi, which, properly speaking, constitutes a portion of the Buddhist Liturgical service, and has its portions for the priests as well as for the congregation, each of whom chaunts the allotted part. It was these services which astonished the Catholic Missionaries as being so like their own ritual, at least, so far as the form is concerned.

"Priest. There has arisen the Illuminator of the world ! the world's Protector ! the Maker of light ! who gives eyes to the world, that is blind, —to cast away the burden of sin.

"Congregation. Thou hast been victorious in the fight : thy aim is accomplished by thy moral excellence : thy virtues are perfect : Thou shalt satisfy men with good things.

"Priest. Gotoma (Sakya) is without sin : He is out of the miry pit. He stands on dry ground.

"Congregation. Yes, He is out of the mire : and he will save other animate beings, that are carried off by the mighty stream.

"Priest. The living world has long suffered the disease of corruption. The Prince of physicians is come to cure men from all diseases.

"Congregation. Protector of the world ! by thy appearance all the mansions of distress shall be made empty. Henceforth, angels and men shall enjoy happiness, &c., &c.

"Priests. To Thee, whose virtue is immaculate, whose understanding is pure and brilliant, who hast the thirty-two characteristic signs complete, and who hast memory of all things, with discernments and foreknowledge.

"Congregation. Reverence be to Thee ! we adore Thee ; bending our heads to our feet.

"Priest. To Thee, who art clean and pure from all taint of sin ; who art immaculate, and celebrated in the three worlds ; who being possessed of the three kinds of science, givest to animated beings the eye to discern the three degrees of emancipation from sin.

"Congregation. Reverence be to Thee !

"Priest. To Thee, who with tranquil mind clearest the troubles of evil times ; who, with loving kindness, teachest all living things to walk in the path designed for them.

"Congregation. Reverence be to Thee !

"Priest. Muni ! (Sage !) whose heart is at rest, and who delightest to explain the doubts and perplexities of men ; who hast suffered much for the good of living beings ; Thy intention is pure ! Thy practices are perfect.

"Congregation. Reverence be to Thee !

"*Priest.* Teacher of the four truths; rejoice in salvation! who, being
"thyself free from sin, desirest to free the world from sin.

"*Congregation.* Reverence be to Thee!"*

This passage undoubtedly justifies the assertion that the Buddhist worships Sakya, but it must be doubted if they do so apart from God, or in any other sense, or to a greater extent than Christians worship Jesus. The fact is, that it is rather veneration than adoration they offer, and believe to be acceptable. They believe him to have been pure, immaculate, and superior to all others; but, undoubtedly, they neither believe him to have been a self-derived being, nor the superior ruler of the universe.

Another proof of the ideas entertained by Sakya, being in harmony with those of ordinary and dogmatic Theism, is found in the distinctions drawn between his sixteen heavens and sixteen hells. The heavens, as we have already seen, are abodes of blessedness, and we have now to notice that the hells are abodes of pain, misery, torment, and agony, all of which are meted out in due proportion to the sins and crimes committed in life by those who are unfortunate enough to become their tenants.

The series of hells is, as just stated, equally numerous with that of the heavens, and for the millions of Buddhist believers they are described with a painful minuteness, almost equalling the brimstone pictures of Spurgeon, or the horrible revelling in torture found in the lines of Pollak. Christian writers have been as much astonished as they have been assisted by this; but although ready enough to accept the material, they can hardly be persuaded to authenticate by their imprimatur the fearful details which the Buddhists have trained themselves into accepting. It is curious, too, and needs some learned inquiry, how it happened that Dante in his wonderful poem, "*The Inferno*," should have described, even in the minutest details, so many of the Buddhist torments. There is a minute agreement, and upon so many curious points, that it is utterly impossible it could have been accidental. For instance, when, according to the Buddhist theology, a sinner passes away from life he is immediately borne into the realms of semi-darkness, there to be tried, and condemned, or rewarded. There sets the judge who, according to immutable laws, decrees what shall be done with the souls before him. The description given by Dante will stand for that of the Tibetians:

"From the first circle made we our descent
Down to the second,—which, though less in size,
Holds grief more poignant,—forcing shrill lament.
Grinding his teeth—there Minos dreadful stands;
The culprits, as they enter in, he tries,—
Awards their sentence—issues his commands.
The guilty soul confesses all its crimes,
When brought before him: then the judge decrees
Its proper place in hell: as many times
As he himself encircles with his tail,
Such is the destined number of degrees
The souls are plunged within the infernal scale.
Crowds ever stand before him, doomed to woe;
All in succession to the Judge repair:
They speak—they hear—and then are hurled below."

They are sent away to their future abodes, and some of them are doomed to wander about, unblest, shivering in cold, and unable anywhere to procure warmth. The picture of their roaming through the mighty forest,

* Prinsep. Tibet, Tartary, and Mongolia, pp. 142-144.

and of the wind almost whistling through them, as furnished in the *Bedegat*, might have served Dante for the framework of the following :

“Throughout the place speaks not the light of heaven;
And the vast region bellows loud and deep,
As when o’er ocean warring winds are driven.
The infernal blast, unceasing in its course,
Hurries along the miserable crowd,
Whirling and tossing with resistless force.
As starlings, ere a winter, in a vast
Innumerable squadron wheel their flight;
So, ever and anon, this sweeping blast,
Now up—now down,—this way, and that again,
Impels the wretched souls :—no comfort springs,
From hope of rest, nor e’en of lessened pain.”

Some of the wicked are to be confined, during a certain period, in hells of molten brass, raised to the highest degree of heat; others to be in hells where they will be continually torn by the attendant evil spirits, who, as in a similar picture by Dante, are represented as delighting in afflicting torture; some are to be bound where they will be cut and lacerated continually by axes; others where they will be sawn asunder, and this terrible process will be repeated over and over again; for although the operation continually goes on, there is no actual close to it while the sinner is within that region. There are some who tear themselves, and others, who are compelled to tear all with whom they come in contact, as Dante also describes :

“I saw two sit, who back to back were put,
As pan props pan while heating on the fire,
With leprous blotch distained from head to foot.
No groom, who longs to hie him to his home,
Or hastens to fulfil his lord’s desire,
E’er plied so rapidly the currycomb,
As each around him plied his nails amain;
So furious did the irritation seem;
And this the only aid they could obtain.
Thus the parched skin they drew off with the nail,
E’en as a knife scrapes off the coat from bream,
Or other fish that bears a larger scale.”

Then there follows a remarkable range of fire hells, in which the damned will be constantly exposed to the intensest heat it is possible to conceive. Some must be continually upon hot rocks; many of this class will lie upon hot sheets of metal, while others of a guiltier order will be scorched by the flames proceeding from the walls of their terrible abode, and many are to suffer from the power of flames which will issue out of their own mouths, from the fire raging within. But why should we range the fields of torture further? Suffice it to say that they have all the minor hells which imagination can conceive; and that these various lesser hells are added, in order that when a sinful man is condemned to any of them, the proper degree of punishment may be inflicted. And all these hells are painted for the faithful—they are engraved upon rocks and temples, and certainly nothing more fearful can be conceived than many of the scenes which have been copied from the Buddhist works. Upham has furnished several engravings in his work upon Buddhism, and, in truth, they are just the same in all their horrible features, and in the glee of the tormenting fiends, as were those sent out some years ago by many Christian Societies. It should be observed, too, that Mara, the

King of Serpents, is Lord and Master over all these hells—he is the serpent still, and ever delights in inflicting pain. But the redeeming feature of all this horror lies in the fact, that punishment is not immutable. A man can rise out of it. By Sakya the doctrine was earnestly preached, that even from the lowest deep there would be emancipation, and that eternal torture could not be. So that, with all his errors about God and duty, it is evident that the notion of justice was distinctly in his mind.

P. W. P.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

IN the Old Testament there is a book known as the Book of Ecclesiastes, to which we are now to direct our attention. This writing is described in the Hebrew as "the words of Koheleth, the son of David, king of Jerusalem." Many angry discussions have arisen about the precise meaning of the word Koheleth. Does it mean Wisdom teaching Wisdom? It seems to mean, "one who addresses an assembly;" and hence the Greek translation, "one who harangues a congregation," which has the addition in English of "the Preacher," a word which conveys very fairly the meaning—that is, if we do not insist too rigidly upon the modern conception. At what date this book first found its way into the Jewish Canon it is difficult, or even impossible, to determine; as also is the other point, why it was inserted. Certainly it was neither for its spiritual teaching nor the nature of its moral lessons. The fact can only be accounted for upon the supposition now pretty generally accepted by liberal scholars, that all the Jewish writings were collected together, and formed, as a whole, what would be properly called "the collected literature of the Hebrews," and that this collection, in the course of time, was called the Sacred Canon. In no other way can we account for the introduction of so many books whose principles antagonise the religious teachings contained in other works in the collection. The early Christians were astonished at the unmistakable scepticism of this and other writings; and the same passages which excited their alarms have proved stumbling-blocks in the path of good men in all succeeding ages. Neither are we to suppose that the Christians were singular in this; for, consulting the most ancient Jewish writers, we find that they also had their doubts. In one of them we are informed, that "some of the wise men desired to conceal, that is, to forbid the public reading of the book Koheleth, because there were found in it words tending to heresy."* St. Jerome, in his Commentary upon Ecclesiastes, represents the learned Jews as saying: "As some books which Solomon wrote had been lost, this, too, ought to be obliterated; because it asserted that the creatures of God are vain, and regarded all things as worthless, and preferred meat and drink and delicacies to everything else." They found, however, a reason for its preservation in the final chapter, but evidently, as a whole, it displeased them. It is certain that they objected to its being read by very young persons; and for the simple reason, that its doctrines were not likely either to impress them with any noble sense of religious duty, or to stir them up to an ardent love for what was pure and noble. Had they enjoyed the theological light of the nineteenth century, it may be that, in place of dealing with it in that fashion, they would have been earnest in pressing it upon the attention of the youngest members of their families; for now it matters not what coarseness, or obscenity, or sensual passages appear in sacred books; all can be passed through the mystical alembic, and made to issue out as the concentrated essence of spiritualism—at least, for those who are content to shut their ears to the truth, and their sense of truth to obvious meanings.

* Pesikta Rabbati, fol. 33, c. 1.

The book is decidedly a dangerous book, at least if we may consider as dangerous any writing which ascribes higher value to meat and drink than to thought and duty. The sensualist finds here his strongest arguments; nor do I know of any work in which so great a show of reason is deduced in favour of animal gratification as is made in this. The works of Moore, his "Odes of Anacreon," have been generally denounced by the religious world; but they were not so dangerous as Ecclesiastes, and, moreover, they were not presented as constituting a methodical philosophy of life. They appealed to the feelings, but this to the reason; for the Preacher endeavours to show that there is nothing better than that a man should eat and drink and live for enjoyment. True, indeed, as we are invited to consider, he believes that all is vanity—that it is all emptiness; and some argue, therefore, he did not teach the doctrine of Epicureanism. But how not, when we find that he treats goodness, and wisdom, and sacrifice, as vanity equally with that of sensualism? He does not say the sensual life is vanity and vexation of spirit above that of all others, but only that it is vanity because all is vanity. So that if we do good and deny ourselves, it is vanity or foolishness of the heart which cannot bring any permanent satisfaction; and sensuality is treated precisely the same. What, then, is the natural inference but this, that if all comes to the same end, for all practical and reasonable purposes, we may as well seek enjoyment and momentary gratification from any open sources, and find pleasure in all that can afford it? All the sanctities and behests of life are treated with the most supreme contempt, and they who toil for the Eternal are viewed as vain fools who pursue a shadow. But according to the theory of its defenders, "the last chapter sets all right!" We shall see how far this saying is justified by the facts, when we have thoroughly explained the whole; but even if truth be found there, the apology sounds strange coming from the pens of men who are so chary of admitting good in the works of Shakspeare, or any nobleness in those of Byron. Curiously enough, when they read the latter authors they are constantly on the look-out for naughty passages; they read like royalist censors of the press in foreign lands, and it is surprising how wonderfully they succeed in hunting up the improper allusions. If the poet show a pretty foot peeping out from beneath the dress, they are shocked beyond measure; and if he present a young lady half-undressed, they are thrown into a wild fever of excitement, and would burn the poet's works in order to save the morality of the nation. But the obscene or sceptical passages which abound in the Old Testament they pass over without a murmur, treating them as though they were apples of gold set in silver, or as if they were so infinitely removed beyond the sphere of daily criticism, that the same censures must not be applied to them which are applied to others.

By whom was this book written? Again we are compelled to dissent from the popular ideas respecting the author, who certainly was not Solomon. In common with other notions taken upon trust, I long looked upon it as a settled historical fact that Solomon wrote this book, for I believed what is commonly taught in sermons and essays intended for general readers. Judge, then, my astonishment when I read the works of learned critics, on finding that all scholars had long abandoned that notion as untenable. I found that to assert, amongst learned men, that Solomon wrote the piece would be to expose myself to their derision; and I could but wonder how so many of them have the impudence publicly to declare as a truth that which in private they cannot believe. This, however, is a point we are not now to discuss; our present business is with the question of authorship. Hugo Grotius was the first modern critic who called into question the old belief, and he very modestly said: "I think the work is not a production of Solomon, but one written in the name of that king, as being led by repentance to the composition of it. It contains many words which cannot be found except in Ezra, Daniel, and the Chaldee paraphrasists." This was seizing upon the great difficulty, and, in fact, indicating, in a few words, the whole objection. Such words are common, and we cannot find any explanation of their presence save that the book was not written until after the Captivity. Whenever the language of a book abounds in foreign words, we are forced to the conclusion that there had been a free communi-

cation between the people, and hence the adoption of phrases and forms of speech. Now, that this book labours under this difficulty is not denied by even the most orthodox critics. Knobel has given a long list of the words, and, as we run them over, we see at once that the writer would hardly have used them in place of the old Hebrew words, unless the language had undergone a great change. Ewald, one of our finest Hebraists, says that "the Hebrew of this book is so strongly "penetrated with Aramæan, that not only single, but often-recurring words are "entirely Aramæan; but the foreign influence is infused into the finest veins "of the language."* The same has been urged by other writers, and hence we may safely conclude that the book could not have been written until at least 400 years after the death of Solomon, in the time of the Captivity, when they spake as therein written. Unfortunately, however, an objection of this kind is not fairly estimated by the great mass of men. They believe in the authenticity of the Canon without any valid reason; and thus, being a matter of feeling or prejudice, they do not fairly weigh the facts which antagonise their ideas. And, as it happens, they can always refer to some divine, who has declared that "no reasonable man can doubt the point" then in dispute. Thus they feel that to them it must ever remain a matter to be decided by authority. In the end, of course, even in popular works, the truth will out, and there will be as many to quote on the one side as there now are upon the other. Even now all the learning is upon the side of rejection, as is proven by looking into the modern works upon the authenticity of the Canon. Instance the highly-praised treatise of Moses Stuart, a man who wrote his book upon the "Old Testament "Canon" in order to oppose the freethinking critics, and yet he was obliged to make very great concessions, which only strengthened the position of his chosen opponents. He says: "The diction of this book differs so widely from that of "Solomon, in the Book of Proverbs, that it is difficult to believe they both came "from the same pen. Chaucer does not differ more from Pope than Ecclesiastes "from Proverbs. It seems to me, when I read Koheleth, that it presents one "of those cases which leave no room for doubt, so striking and prominent is the "discrepancy. In our English translation this is, in some good measure, lost, by "running both books into the same English mould." This may be remarked of many other books in the collection, for in translation their peculiarities are wholly lost. Knobel, who is pronounced by Professor Noyes to be the author of the best critical essay upon this book, says: "No point in the criticisms of the Old "Testament is better established than that Ecclesiastes was not written by "Solomon, but in a later age." Noyes himself, who has given us new translations of all the poetical books, is also of the same opinion; and Professor Davidson, in his Introduction, admits that "there are conclusive reasons for denying that the "son of David wrote it." So that if this question be now brought to the bar, in order to have it decided whether Solomon wrote the book, then, regard being had to the learning as well as the piety of the witnesses, the majority will be found to be against the popular opinion, and to reject the claims made for him to be considered as the author.

(To be continued.)

* Davidson's Introdnc., p. 787.

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OUT OF THE CLOUD;

OR, AN ENGLISH RECTOR IN SEARCH OF A CREED.
A TALE; BY P. W. P.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST LESSON OF LIFE.

It is interesting to note how differently human beings act who have recently sustained a great domestic affliction, such, for instance, as the loss by death of a child or parent. Some members of a family are completely prostrated—rendered incapable of transacting business, while their brethren and sisters, although in no sense inferior in feeling, enter with coolness into the ordinary concerns of life, as if nothing particular had occurred. The former are said to be possessed of more sensibility, but it is doubtful if, upon the whole, they who are the most excited are not the least painfully impressed. Many who can meet the desk and counter claims, retire into quiet, and secretly abandon themselves to emotions which are powerful to destroy. Such are they who have faces as of iron, with hearts as susceptible as those of the unplighted maiden; they have what Plato called “strong and beautiful souls,” and are of that class upon which we may rely for practical assistance in the hours of life’s necessity. Among the sorrow-smitten are many who, acting upon principle, will not permit themselves to indulge in the luxury of tears, but are careful to erect strong stoical barriers which shall prevent the outward flow of grief; yet, it frequently happens that, like stout sea-walls of solid masonry, clamped with iron bands, which are borne away by the storm upon its victorious billows, the heart of stoicism is subdued, and its barriers submerged beneath the rising tides of sorrow. Others, delighting to exhibit the intensity of grief, fasten upon old friends, into whose ears they pour the narrative of suffering; anticipating tears of sympathy as their compensation, they look with disgust upon those who pay not in the expected coin; nor do they hesitate to describe them as unfeeling, harsh, and cruel. Many who have cause of mourning, are rendered speechless, and cannot avoid resenting every attempt at condolence as an impertinence; others, who have been remarkable for their silence, become loquacious and loudly demonstra-

tive; some are rendered hysterically joyous and eloquent, while too many sink into stupor and moroseness, or become exacting and suspicious of all who approach them. They who lay their sorrow to heart, and resolve not only to conquer but to extract strength from it, are few in number. Nor, perhaps, will this be marvelled at when it is remembered that both thought and experience must co-operate to teach, that the seed of sorrow needs quiet and shade to enable it to bear its proper fruit of strength and mental force. Give it but time and silence, and it will not fail to work out its own perfect work.

In the home of the Lesters the sudden death of its mistress had completely unhinged the minds of the inmates, so much so that it is impossible to describe how the first hours of that bereavement were passed through. The orphans, and those who gathered round them, were stricken dumb; Jane alone was able to obtain the relief of tears. Occasionally, and especially at first, they were able to persuade themselves that the recent events were but parts of some hideous dream out of which they must soon awake. There was relief in this thought, but as the hours flew by and the house grew busy with the preparations necessary for completing the work of death, this also faded from their minds, leaving only the stern unalterable fact that death had been there to do his worst.

Cousin Mary had undertaken the mourning preparations, and Ella the household duties; an arrangement based upon the theory that having something to do would prevent their giving way to grief; an evil which, as they had agreed, for the sake of George, should be carefully avoided. And it was wonderful to see them hold their sorrow in subjection. It is the common belief that the strength of will and power of self-control of man is greater than that of woman; but when the death-storm has burst and spent its fury upon the home, it is woman who first rises superior to its violence, and builds from the ruins a new habitation of blessedness for those who have been saved from its ravages. Even while her heart is wrung by agony she remembers those who are weak, and worketh for their perfect salvation.

Lester divided his time between them, but without speaking, save in those signs of woe, which as far surpass language in their power of expressing the soul's deepest emotions as the loftiest poetry surpasses the dullest prose. At odd hours, when tired of watching Ella or Mary at their tasks, he stole away to the little garden-house which had been so tastefully decorated by the pencil of his mother; and there, when as one after another Memory gave back the records of happy hours he had passed by her side, it seemed to be utterly impossible that she, who had been the life of all, could be dead, and was no more to return. At other times he wandered away up the old stairs to the well-known nursery, where in a drawer, the loving one had arranged the toys and puzzle-boxes, the ships and Christmas pieces of his boyhood. Everywhere well-remembered objects met his eye which served to recal memories of the past; but they came draped in such forms as he had never previously seen them wear. She was gone, yet her presence was everywhere; and objects had now become holy which formerly were but earthly and commonplace. It was a sore trial to look upon them, but the worst of all was to sit in the old room and pass the long evenings without hearing that deep, rich voice, which every night, for so many years, had filled it with melodies of soul-stirring power.

Doctor Moule called frequently, but saw no fit opening for speech. In other houses he was always ready with language to console and strengthen;

but in this all the mourners hid their grief, and kept silent, so that it was impossible to break through their barriers of reserve. He saw into their hearts, but could find no opening through which to pass and administer to their agony.

"Ah, yes," said he, speaking loudly to himself, his old habit, and while descending to his carriage on the third morning, after he had been vainly endeavouring to draw them into conversation; "Ah, yes! they have eaten of the tree of knowledge, and know that they are naked. They are civilised to the highest degree, and like tender hot-house plants the first adverse blast takes half their power of life away; they are refined, but weakened also. Ruder descendants of Adam, like the Watson's children I just now left, can sit down and relieve themselves by pouring forth a sea of tears, but that is denied to such as these. The whole flood of grief is rolled back upon their hearts, where it operates to oppress and shake the foundations of their mental strength. They are capable of higher and purer enjoyments I know, but in the same proportion they are more alive to pain and mental suffering. When I travelled in Switzerland with Colonel Lester and the consumptive poet, who was perpetually talking about the glorious mountain tops being visited by troops of stars and crowned with greater glory, it occurred to me that, in return, they were visited also by ruder storms, and riven by fiercer lightnings than any which descended to the vallies below. It was well said by Celsus that the law of compensation never fails, and it fails not here. . . . But I must see these poor children again. There will come a time for the tide to turn, or burst its banks, and I should like to be there to steer them through it."

Doctor Moule was what the world, in its ignorance, intending to condemn by implication, calls "a practical man," alike the disgust of sentimentalist and the terror of the maudlin. It was useless endeavouring to win sympathy from him for imaginary scenes of sorrow or joy; for, although a gentlemanly listener, he was sure to finish up by asking some question whose only answer involved the demolition of the house of cards which fancy had reared. Fond of facts, he condemned those who composed themselves to sentimental dreaming of sorrows, instead of endeavouring to discover, and then to remove, the sources of real suffering. The authors who occasionally met him in society, had long since concluded that he had no atom of poetry or sentiment in his nature; and yet there was not a gentleman in the Shire of whom it could be more truthfully said that he was both a poet and a man of lively sensibilities. In this case old associations, co-operating with his kindly nature, induced him to desire to render all the assistance in his power, and a favourable opportunity speedily offered itself.

On the fourth evening, as if comprehending how heavily the hours would hang upon their hands, he paid them another visit, but succeeded no better in his attempts to win them over to some friendly chat. The ladies could only answer his questions in monosyllables; and George, doing violence to his usual gentlemanly politeness, was content with not speaking, merely moving his head to signify assent or disapproval.

Shortly after the Doctor's arrival, the ladies retired for the night; and the sound of their light footsteps had scarcely died away before Lester found himself exposed to a perfect broadside of condemnation, and was called upon to answer charges based upon his "dogged silence, which would pass for selfishness, and inevitably operate to injure his character and disposition."

This onslaught operated like an electric shock, inducing him to reply somewhat tartly. "I hope, Sir, that my conduct has not furnished you with

any justification for those charges, for I cannot consider myself guilty. I am but young, still quite old enough to understand that selfishness is the barbarian vice which in civilized society only survives in low natures, and I would a thousand times rather be laid at once in the grave of my mother than consent to live if I could believe myself capable of becoming its slave. Be assured, Sir," he added, in a milder tone, yet with dignity, "that in thus estimating my conduct you have done me wrong."

"Well! well! I hope I have, I hope I have, for it would grieve me sorely to see the son of my old friend give way to that sort of meanness. Still, George, I must say it looks very much like it, very much; and I should be pleased to hear you clear yourself of it in a more specific form, for I shouldn't have hinted it unless you had given me cause."

Lester appeared provoked and astonished, when he confessed himself utterly unable to comprehend what was the overt act, and asked to be informed of its nature.

Not a whit unwilling, the Doctor replied.

"Yes! of course I will; and yet, after all, it is but a waste of breath, for the case is plain enough. Here you sit with those noble-spirited girls, whose hearts are ready to burst, but who are restraining their tears because of desiring to avoid increasing your pain. They have not told me, but I know that it is so; and yet you have no cheerful or any other word for their ears, and no comfort for their hearts. Both of them need brotherly and manful consolation; but instead of supplying their wants, you go up and down the house as silent as the grave, and sit with them as mopishly as if all the grief were yours, and they were bound to furnish consolation. Now, that is what I call selfishness; and if I were as young as you are, I'd endeavour to do them some practical good, even if my own heart should burst during the struggle."

"But," interposed the culprit, "you overlook the fact that I am striving my utmost to stifle my own feelings. I have not once given way in their presence; they have not witnessed my tears; and hence I cannot charge myself with having done anything to increase their sufferings."

"No, probably not; but you have done nothing to relieve them. What I desire is to see you aiding them in their affliction instead of being a charge upon their generosity. You have no right to grieve their hearts, and so there is no virtue in your abstinence. I am no admirer of negative goodness, for I believe it to be an utter mistake; and of this I was more than ever convinced by a discourse I heard at church last Sunday. It was Dolland who preached, and so, George, you will know that the sermon was a good one, for he always buys his discourses from a first-class writer. He proved that the Hebrews were forbidden to do many things which the heathen were constantly doing, and showed that the grandeur of their system lay in the distinct negative it gave to evil actions; but when he came to speak of doing good, then, as he said, its imperfection was seen; it had to be supplemented with the 'Thou shalt do.' And that is what men require; they must be informed of what they are to do, as well as of what they are to abstain from doing. Now, the principle upon which you are acting is their imperfect, one-sided, negative one. You don't do the girls any positive harm, but you don't do them the good you might. You are not their tormentor, as you have no right to be, neither are you their benefactor, as you ought to be. And what I want is that you shall try to forget your own trouble so as to be better able to render them a service. And after all is said which can be, that plan pays the best. When I was with your father in the Peninsula we had in hospital a wounded soldier who did

the patients more good than all their medicine did them; he was a lively, contented, good-hearted fellow, and I never felt so much inclined to quarrel with Fate as I did on the night he was killed. When in hospital, he suffered as much as any of the patients, but the fellow always managed to forget himself when he could do good to others. I remember going late one evening into the ward where he lay, and found him busy reading some old book to four chaps who couldn't sleep, and when I remonstrated with him, saying that he should take care of his own health, he told me that he was never better or freer from pain than when he was trying to kill pain in others. Your brave father always said, that man was the best soldier in the service, and I know that he was the best philosopher."

Lester, much moved by this rough address, rose and rapidly paced the room; at length becoming calmer, he stood over against the speaker and said, "Yes, Doctor, you are right, for if not selfish as a rule, I have acted somewhat selfishly in this. And yet who can justly condemn me when they learn what I know of the greatness of my loss? Just at the moment when my life-prospects were flowering, this sudden blight descends to strip and plunder me of my strength and guidance. Here, upon the threshold of life, I am singled out from others to drink the cup of bitterness to the lees; and yet while thus plunged into misery, and made to submit to wrong, I am expected to console others. It may be philosophical to ask it, but I fear I have too much of the human clinging to me to be able to grant the request."

"And pray, Sir, what do you mean when you speak of being robbed, plundered, and made to drink to the lees of bitterness? Do you imagine that George Lester has been singled out by Nature to bear some unequalled burden? Would there be any proper cause to complain even if she had done this? You speak as if by right you could claim happiness. What have you done to deserve it? Nature pays all her workmen to the last fraction. Bring in your account for labour done, and the reward will not be far off. What have you achieved to compensate for what you have already received? You have been nursed, fed, housed, warmed, clothed, educated, loved, and protected; and I challenge you to say that, in all this, you have not been more than overpaid for what you have already done, if, indeed, you have done anything. I fear no contradiction in saying that although your loss is great, still you are in debt both to Nature and Society. That, however, is but one side of the account. You have still to consider the effect of this morbid silence upon yourself. Give way to this morose feeling, and you will be a cripple through life; rise above it, and you will become strong. Sorrow as much as you please, I shall not take you to task for that; but I bid you to find your work in the world, set your heart bravely to the doing of it, and then if Nature does not pay even more than you deserve in the current coin of happiness, I shall allow you to declare me ignorant of what belongs to the truest enjoyment."

Lester was about to reply, but the other rose to depart, saying, kindly, "No, George, no, above all things, we will not discuss that matter just now. I have merely told you a bit of my mind; moreover, you are fresh from Oxford; your logic-edge is likely to be a little too sharp, for mine is sadly rusted. And you know I never allow any one to interfere in my practice. Just leave your logic and use your eyes, and then you will find the measure of truth in what I have said, which you stand in need of. It is sharp, I know, but not unkindly; and blisters must be applied when necessary. Let

the blister rise, and then, probably, I shall find some healing ointment. Till then, remember your duty to the girls. Farewell."

The morning came when the deceased was to be borne away, but before the coffin was finally closed, the door of the room of death opened, and George entered, leading his cousin. They had been bound to each other from their childhood, and by mutual confession of love for about two years; but here, where the dear one lay, they seemed almost as strangers to one another, neither caressing nor looking their thoughts of love. Their minds were occupied by the dead and the greatness of their loss. Mary bent over the cofined clay to print kisses on that marble brow of her "more than mother." It was the second time that, in bitterness of heart, she had looked into a mother's coffin. And if she lingered after Lester had given the signal for departure, it was only mentally, in presence of the dead, to register a vow in heaven to devote herself to the task of making happy him who was the idol of her young heart, and the son of one who had shown her so much kindness.

The door again opened for Lester to lead in his sister, and Jane, who followed, closed it behind them. It was a sad sight to see those two young souls tossed on the wild sea of sorrow. True it is, as the Doctor had said, there is mourning in the land, and it is a grand fact that man can mourn; as it is also true that sorrow is a wave upon whose crest the noblest are raised to greater heights of thought and action than they would otherwise have reached. They who look on can see the advancing legions of brethren, whom they who are engaged in the battle descry not; and they who have had experience in the world of grief may perceive advantages which, through the thickness of the tear-mist, are hidden from the sight of those who yet mourn. Still, what man is he who has led an orphaned sister to kiss, for the last time, the face of their cofined mother, without feeling an intense desire to deny the justice of the course of Nature, and to take up arms against that inexorable Fate which has so directed the current of events? The philosopher may know that sorrows are as good for the soul as storms are for the earth and atmosphere; but who can remember his philosophy when the sisterly orphaned hand is convulsively clutched by his own, and the pressure of grief seems great enough to wring the last drop of hope out of the orphaned heart? It is then that the sea of human emotion rises into tempest to smite the very heavens themselves; for the question irresistibly comes, if there be good in it, could it not all have been achieved in some other way?

Jane was the first to speak, and the orphans heard her with mingled feelings of joy and astonishment.

"Yes, Master George and Miss Ella, it is hard, terrible hard, to bear; but you will love one another! I know you will, you must; for nobody who has lived long with that blessed angel can help it. You keep on calling her your dear mother, but you don't know that she was mine too. Often have I wanted to tell of her goodness, and she wouldn't let me. She found me sunk in the pit, found me in the deep mire, and raised me up to make my heart rejoice. When the cruel world hated, and cursed, and hissed at the unfortunate girl left behind by the soldiers—when they said that I was given over to sin and wickedness as a child of the devil, she came to me with her sunny face and soft voice, and took the babe out of my poor weak arms, and fed it, and washed it, and kissed it, with her innocent lips, and then, sitting down by the bed in which she had laid me, she spoke so softly and kindly about the good Father God, and looked so much like the angels I had heard and dreamt about when I was a child, that it seemed as if she could not be a woman, but

was one of the spirits of heaven sitting by my side. I felt myself again and again, to make sure that I was alive, and that it was no dream; and when I found it was all real, I kissed my baby, and fell to sleep, as I had never slept before. And when the Cold Hand came and touched my baby Johnny, and it died on my breast, she watched over the dead babe and the mad mother, and saved me from flying in the face of Providence, by causing the death I should have died. Ah, children, you know not how good she was to me, and how she healed me with love and tenderness. But, thank God, after many years, though it was only to die, John came back from the wars, bringing the paper we had both signed, showing that we had not married because he was a Catholic, and his Colonel wouldn't give leave. I was glad he had this for her sake, to show that I had not been so bad as the world said. She never believed it of me, never; and when I took her the paper, she said, 'If you had been the worst living, it was my duty to try and save you; for if I did not forgive, how could I hope to be forgiven?' I never could see that she did anything to need forgiveness. But that was her way, and she did more good by it than all the preachers ever I heard. All the long years I lived with her, she never upbraided, never spoke unkindly to me. It was from her lips I heard the first words of mercy, and to the last I heard no other. But before she goes to the grave, tell me, Master George, tell me, Miss Ella, that you'll never send me away. I've lost her, but while you live, and will let me be near you, I have something to live for, and somebody to love."

In a few meaning words, she received the assurances, and then Lester turned to his sister, to whom he spoke neither of philosophy nor of fate, but only of the future. It was the first time since the blow had descended that he seemed to have recovered the use of his natural powers. Silently he supported Ella, and was glad to see the overcharged heart relieved by a flow of tears, which he said nothing to check. But after the lapse of some minutes, in a rich tone, and with much emotion, he spoke.

"Ella, she loved with more than a mother's love, and to gladden her spirit in another sphere, we must be devoted to each other as she was devoted to us. Were it only in reverence to her, neither coldness, doubt, nor difficulty must ever be permitted to have power to separate us. Just now I am but a child in the ways of the world. I have been living in a dream, wherein I looked for every one to work for my happiness. But I am awake now. Doctor Moule, in a few words of friendly bitterness, taught me a more valuable lesson than I had previously learnt; making me feel how aimless, how little worthy of praise my life has hitherto been, and showing me that happiness, worthy of the name, comes alone through noble effort after the right and self-sacrifice. Up to this hour, I have been no brother to you, but only a source of anxiety and trouble; but henceforth I will be what I should be. Forgive my past errors, and rely upon me in the future. To you I shall tell my hopes and plans; and whenever you have care upon your mind, come to me; for, the good God above helping, I will labour to compensate for all that you have lost. I will endeavour to be father, mother, and brother in one."

There was no mistaking the earnestness of the speaker, nor that Ella gave him credit for all that he had said; still she could make no answer, but only cling to him with a convulsive fondness. At length, dropping upon her knees, her heart found utterance. . . . "Oh, God, I thank Thee, that Thou hast not left me alone; grant Thou that we may be all in all to each other."

The door closed behind them, and they went forth into the world. Time and Passion were now to test the vows so solemnly pledged to each other.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XXIII.

PARLIAMENT AND CONVOCATION.

WITH his embassy to Avignon, a new era commences in the life of Wycliffe. Doubtless, the seeds of what now found expression in thought and action had been gradually deposited in his mind during many thoughtful years. He had for a considerable time previously to his journey to France, "publicly professed divinity, and read lectures in it, which he did with very great applause, "having such authority in the schools that whatever he said was received as "an oracle." It was in this capacity that he had formerly kept up a continual warfare against the Mendicants, with occasional references to the temporal power of the Pope. But on his return from the Papal Court, his lectures soon assumed a different shape; he began now to attack the hierarchy on the score of their immorality. This he had not hesitated to do when it lay in his way before, but now he goes out of his way to do it, and, moreover, he adds an altogether new element, in the shape of attacks on the spiritual authority of the Pope, and on the right of the Church to own property.

His position was unassailable. He declared that ecclesiastical endowments had no Christian sanction, that the moneys claimed by the Church were not due, and that men could be saved without paying tithes to the priest. It is amusing to note the ways in which the Church historians and others, writing from a priestly point of view, seek to explain away Wycliffe's plain language on this point, and, while striving to show that he was a Reformer in the orthodox sense of the term, ignore that which he taught more strenuously than any other thing, namely, the duty of poverty on the part of those who pretended to be followers of him who knew not where to lay his head. In all that we know of him as the parish priest, we find that this was no mere theory with him—he practised what he preached. Christ and the Apostles, he said, were the great exemplars of the true priesthood; and the incumbents of fat benefices, the bishops with their immense revenues, and the Pope, with his pomp, and a treasury full to repletion of the offerings of the faithful, were no true followers of theirs. Speaking of these doctrines, Baxter, the Church of England historian, says: "Sentiments which his most judicious "friends must admit to need qualification and apology, could hardly fail of "being denounced by his enemies as revolutionary." Of course, a "judicious" man cannot possibly admit that it is wrong to pay or receive tithes! Wycliffe, however, declared as much, and, in so doing, set himself in opposition to all Priestcraft; in this, no less than in much else that he said and did, showing himself the true champion of religious freedom.

There were many "judicious" men of the Baxter stamp in those days, and these lent no small assistance to the enemies of Wycliffe, of whom such teaching as this made him many. Accordingly we find that Convocation, composed of "judicious" men who thought Wycliffe's sentiments needed apology, and of those who were inimical to him, summoned him to attend in St. Paul's Cathedral to answer for his reputed misdemeanours. Now it happened that Wycliffe was not without friends. His connection with the Court had brought him acquainted with "old John of Gaunt, time-honoured "Lancaster," then, however, in the prime of life, and in the zenith of his power (the old king being in the last stage of debility), and, ere long, to become the protector of the young king, Richard II. He, and the Earl-Marshal, Lord Percy, determined to attend as Wycliffe's friends and protectors.

At the same time, however, that Convocation assembled, Parliament, the

first of the new reign, met; and the state of feeling on the part of the noble and wealthy classes is shown by the proceedings of that Parliament, while the name, that of "the good Parliament," given to it by the people, shows that a feeling of approbation of those proceedings pervaded the public mind. It was in consequence of the action taken by this Parliament that the three great liminary statutes of Mortmain, of Provisors, and of Præmunire took their perfect shape, forming together the "Great Charter of English liberties against the Church." The first, Mortmain, set an impassable bound to the all-absorbing acquisitions of the Church, and the severance of the land into one sacred, and one common territory—the sacred slowly encroaching till it threatened to swallow up the other. The second, Provisors, wrested away the Papal power of disposing at least of all the benefices in the patronage of spiritual persons. The third, Præmunire, boldly and openly vindicated the right of the State of England to prohibit the admission or the execution of all Papal Bulls or Briefs within the realm, a virtual prophetic, premonitory, declaration of the king's supremacy.* The Parliament, being desirous in their dealings with the Pope, rendered necessary by the passing of these statutes, to have the authority of one of the Doctors of the Church for refusing to obey the Pope's provisions, and for stopping the payment out of the realm of the revenues of the sees held by foreigners, referred the matter to Wycliffe, and he declared, in his reply, that the Parliament were fully empowered to prevent the exercise of any such jurisdiction as the Pope claimed within the realm. So, while Convocation summoned him, Parliament consulted him. In this we have an indication of the different estimation in which Wycliffe was held by priests and by the people.

The day at length arrived on which Wycliffe was to appear in answer to the summons, the 19th day of February, 1377. The St. Paul's of that date was a larger building than the present Cathedral, and built in the old Norman style, and the space around it was also larger than the space now found. The Church dignitaries of various ranks who formed the clerical parliament (the ghost of which still, under the same name of Convocation, gibbers amongst us) were all assembled. The Bishop of London, Courtney by name, the son of the powerful noble, Hugh Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, will preside. As men looked along the ranks and saw assembled there the chief men among the powerful hierarchy of the Church, that Church whose spiritual supremacy had never yet been questioned in England, and to doubt whose holiness had been one of those things which men looked on as simply impossible, they felt that he must be a bold man who will dare to withstand them. In judging of such scenes as this we are too apt to forget that the age in which they occurred was very different from this. In this instance it is very doubtful whether any man but Wycliffe would have dared as much, nor is it to impugn his courage to suppose that he would not have dared, unless he had had the good swords of John of Gaunt and Earl Percy to depend upon in case of need. They will see fair play, while he defeats the priests in argument.

The crowd is dense within and without, the priests are assembled, and they wait the coming of Wycliffe. Look! up Ludgate Hill you see the cavalcade approach, and presently the mailed tramp of John of Gaunt and the bold Percy, with their men-at-arms, is heard on the stone floor of the Church. Make way, good people, make way! 'Tis not so easy, for the crowd is dense. But John of Gaunt and Earl Percy are not the men to

* Milman, *Hist. of Latin Christianity*, vol. vi. p. 100.

brook denial, and they force a passage for themselves and Wycliffe, and some of their men-at-arms. Bishop Courtney, proud among the proudest, and not the least bold man there, frowns his displeasure, and exclaims: "Lord Percy, if I had known what masteries you would have kept in the Church, I would have stopped you out from coming hither." Then John of Gaunt: "He shall keep such masteries though you say nay." Earl Percy (not deigning to notice the Bishop): "Wycliffe, sit down, you are tired, and have need of a seat," Bishop (still more excited): "He must and shall stand. He is cited before his superiors." John of Gaunt: "Lord Percy's motion for Wycliffe is but reasonable. As for you, my Lord Bishop, you are grown so proud and arrogant—but I will bring down your pride, and that of all the prelacy in England." Bishop (sneeringly): "Do your worst, Sir." John of Gaunt (enraged beyond measure): "Thou bearest thyself, so brag upon thy parents which shall not be able to keep thee, they shall have enough to do to help themselves." The Bishop (remembering his dignity): "My confidence is not in my parents, nor in any man else, but only in God, in whom I trust, by whose assistance I will be bold to speak the truth." John of Gaunt (aside to Percy): "I will pluck him by the hair out of the Church, if he insult me further." A real scene this, of that rough old time.

John of Gaunt's last remark, though intended for Percy's private ear, was overheard by some of the bystanders, who, thinking he meant to carry his threat into execution, called upon the people to defend their Bishop. This was the signal for a tumult, easy to imagine but impossible to describe. Lancaster, Gaunt, and Percy had to fight their way with Wycliffe out of the Church, and had some difficulty in making good their retreat. This, however, was but the beginning; the citizens flew to arms, and, followed by the mob, proceeded to the Duke of Lancaster's magnificent palace of the Savoy, in the Strand, which they sacked and burnt, while another party attacked the residence of the Earl Marshal, but did no further mischief than to reverse his arms, in order to notify to the world their opinion that he was a traitor. The same evening an unfortunate clergyman, who was mistaken for Percy, was murdered by the mob, and it was with some difficulty that the authorities succeeded in quelling the riot without further mischief. There is very little doubt that Courtney and his coadjutors had some part in urging on the mob (ever ready for confusion and plunder) to these outrageous acts.

This popular tumult is made use of by the Catholic historians to support the inference that the people were opposed to Wycliffe, although no such inference is properly deducible. The action of the mob is explained by the unpopularity of the Duke of Lancaster, who was suspected of having designs on the throne, to the detriment of young Richard, who, as the son of the Black Prince the conqueror of France, was the people's darling at this time, although afterwards, by reason of his tyranny, as king, to become hated by them. Moreover, Lancaster had insulted the bishop, whose popularity was very great among the citizens. Furthermore, Earl Percy was an unpopular character, it being believed that he was in league with Lancaster in his nefarious intentions of usurpation, and the citizens of London had a peculiar grudge against him, because it was rumoured that he had sought to take away their municipal privileges. These considerations fully explain the course of events, without in the least warranting the idea that Wycliffe and his cause were unpopular; the proof of their popularity, indeed, will be found in the succeeding events,

Courtney was not the man to be disappointed of his prey without a struggle. The writings of Wycliffe were now ransacked (probably with the assistance of his old enemies the Mendicants), and a series of propositions styled heretical and blasphemous extracted therefrom. These were sent to the Pope, the result being three Papal Bulls, one addressed to the University of Oxford, one to the King, and one to the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Bull to the University directed them to deliver up Wycliffe to take his trial for heresy, which, by the Bull to the Archbishop, the Pope had authorised him to conduct, while the King was requested to lend his assistance in the matter, and to authorise the carrying out of the Papal mandate to commit Wycliffe to prison until further instructions were received from the Pope. The University had stood by Wycliffe throughout, and did not fail him now, they treated the Bull with contempt. John of Gaunt being still supreme at Court, the demand for assistance there was no more successful. The Archbishop, however, cited Wycliffe to appear before him, and a meeting of bishops delegated by the Pope to act with him, at his palace at Lambeth; this he did in the early part of 1378. This time he is not accompanied by Lancaster or Percy, but knows that he is backed by a power greater than theirs, that of the people. As the prominent opponent of the Pope, Wycliffe had endeared himself to thousands, while the part taken by the hierarchy against him (the more especially as they had called in the authority of the Pope to aid) had rendered them proportionately unpopular. The priestly party were not prepared for the turn affairs had taken; and thus unintentionally provided Wycliffe with the chance of a victory over them.

JAS. L. GOODING.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 10.—SAKYA UPON HUMAN EQUALITY,

THE mere superficial reader is certain to form a false idea of the essential nature of Sakya's teaching, if he merely fix his attention upon the Buddhist heavens and hells and forms of prayer, for in truth his life-work was much greater and more fruitful; he was antagonising the more ancient teaching of Brahminism, with its endless minute detail of sacrifices and ablutions, prayers and forms of worship. He imported somewhat of the practical moral life into India, and struck boldly at the foundation of the whole system of caste and birth-born inferiority. He was a thorough patriot, who smote hard and home against the evils of his age, neither condescending to pay respect to wealth, station, or power, nor speaking low when boldness became a duty. In India, as in all other lands, the practice extensively prevailed for the rich and powerful to order that the beautiful daughters of their slaves, or, indeed, of any of a lower grade than their own, should be brought to them to become their mistresses. Strange as it may sound, our Saxon ancestors were bound to submit in like manner; and many a life was lost in the struggle to save the loved one from the lewd embraces of the master. Sakya raised his voice against this immoral and brutalising system. He does not appear to have argued the point, but was content to call it evil, and impressed upon all his followers that they must ever set themselves in opposition to the continuance of such a crime.

Many similar and infamous institutions were denounced by this independent teacher, without the introduction of any modifying clauses; so that so far

as the ordinary forms of oppression were concerned, we might esteem him as a reformer whose influence for good was to be for all the world. The rich in India, as well as in Jerusalem and everywhere, laid heavy burdens upon the backs, and even upon the hearts, of the poor; burdens which themselves would not touch with the tips of their fingers, and this, too, he denounced as bad enough to be called unpardonable. For the rich luxuries of the mighty the poor were compelled to toil, and still to toil, hopelessly; and Sakya could not see this without bitterness of soul. He was tender-hearted, having in his nature a large share of the womanly sensibility which caused him to shrink not merely from himself inflicting pain, but also from witnessing its infliction by others. Hence it was that to contemplate all this heavy toil and unrewarded labour was sad to him; his better feelings rose into rebellion against it; and although he did not stand forth prompting men to take up arms to avenge the cause of injured poverty, yet with greater success he attacked the doers of evil, and won large advantages for the poor. These poor, too, could hardly believe what had happened. What! were they then not born to sweat and suffer under heavy loads? Were they not intended by heaven to be as bondmen and bondwomen unto the Rajas and others who ruled and possessed the land? Sakya said, No! but we can readily understand that many rather wished than believed it were true.

But, apart from and far above others, the great distinguishing feature of Sakya's teaching, as a social reformer, and that which caused the most opposition to, perhaps, indeed, the overthrow of Buddhism, was the fact that all men were alike free to enter his congregation, their goodness alone securing them the chief places. Major Cunningham, a good authority,* seems to be of opinion that at first Sakya maintained the doctrine of caste; or, at least, that he did not vehemently oppose it. This may be true; and, indeed, considering how he had been educated, it is most probable that he did so. But are we, therefore, to coincide with the critic, who says that "afterwards and in order to obtain more converts, he abolished the caste system, and was upon quite as friendly terms with Sudras as with Brahmins"? Are we necessarily to be accounted selfish if, at the age of twenty, we did not adopt all the principles which we may feel called upon to teach at forty? Do we not all know that the systems in which we are trained exert an almost fatal power over the mind, rendering us incapable of casting them off all at once? If a man gradually wean himself from them, it is all we can fairly demand. And if it require, even in Europe, a considerable degree of courage for a man to stand up, alone, to oppose a system which has been the honoured of ages, why concede less when such was the case with caste in India? Instead of reflecting upon Sakya because this was not his first step, we hold that he is to be honoured for having taken it, without regard to whether it was early or late in life. But, in truth, it requires considerable time and thought before a man arrives at an intellectual perception of this truth. We may jump at it, as many do, but then they only hold it as a theory which they seldom practise when brought into the society of men of a lower social grade. Sakya, however, saw it in its true light, and hence taught that all men were equal; all were to be taught, and all honoured for their good actions, punished for the bad. He had lived as a prince, and as such had mingled with princes; he had lived with the poor and had studied them; and so out of his own experience, aided by his good sense, he had arrived at his conclusion, and once there, no power could change or cause him to be silent. The word had been

* Bhilasa Topse,

uttered, his disciples repeated it, and so, to the alarm of all Brahmins, it went forth through India, that the new teacher recognised no distinctions of class, caste, or birth, but only the difference between good and bad men, and that all classes were equally received to his teaching. Abbe Huc, in his work upon China, gives the narrative of Sakya's mode of action, as now related among the Chinese. He says :—

“The Brahmins mocked him, because he received into the number of his disciples miserable men, who were rejected by the first classes of Indian society. But he contented himself with replying, ‘My law is a law of mercy for all.’ One day the Brahmins were scandalised at seeing a daughter of the inferior caste of Tchandala received as a religious woman. Sakya said : ‘There is not between a Brahmin and a man of another caste the difference that there is between gold and a stone, between light and darkness. The Brahmin, in fact, did not proceed out of the ether, or the wind. He did not cleave the earth to appear in the daylight like the fire that issues from the wood of the Arani. The Brahmin was born of a woman, like the Tchandala ; where, then, dost thou see the cause that should render the one noble and the other vile ? The Brahmin himself, when he is dead, is abandoned as an object vile and impure, precisely like a person from another caste ; where, then, is the difference ?’” *

This doctrine of human equality is, properly speaking, the grand Buddhist centre of religious relationship which yet prevails in all countries where the religion is known. It is not, as so many suppose, a purely Christian doctrine, but was taught and believed in every land where Buddhism had made its way.

P. W. P.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

(Continued from page 352.)

THE general style of the language of this book is that of an used up man ; and as a rule which has its exceptions, the ideas are low when compared with those found in the book of Job, or in Prometheus, and in similar works of modern times. The author thus opens :—Mere vanity, mere vanity, “all is vanity. What profit hath a man by all his labour, with which he wearies himself under the sun ? One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh : but the earth abideth for ever. The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose. The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north ; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits. All the rivers run into the sea ; yet the sea is not full ; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again. All things are full of labour : man cannot utter it : the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be ; and that which is done is that which shall be done ; and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new ? it hath been already of old time, which was before us. There is no remembrance of former things ; neither shall there be any remembrance of things that are to come with those that shall come after.” †

It has been argued by many orthodox writers that, independently of the “found wisdom” which they profess to discover in this book, there is something so noble in the arrangement of its ideas as to suggest the Divine Authorship. They remind me of the story related of a noble personage having been induced to listen

* Chinese Empire, p. 394.

† Eccles. i. 2-11.

to the reading of a work under the impression that it was by Sir Walter Scott. As the reader proceeded, the noble listener commanded many pauses, in order to dwell upon the fine passages which, as he frequently urged, none but the master-hand could have traced. When it was ended, he was informed of the fact that the work was by another hand, and, with curious inconsistency, he immediately began to find fault with many of those parts which he had previously praised. I think, strange as it may appear, that he is but the type of a common class, for in modern times there is a sort of literary despotism. Men read through the spectacles of the critics. If a book be well praised by a few, then the many must add their applause, and I fear, without having any sufficient reason. It seems to be thus that the orthodox writers have been induced to extol the language and composition of this book; it has no justification in the facts.

According to the author, all the changes he enumerates produce nothing new. All moves in settled and unchanging circles. There is nothing to be seen or found which was not previously known, and consequently there can be no real progress. Now, however much may be said about the wisdom or the want of artistic tact of an author who thus opens his discourse, it must be freely admitted, even by his friends, that the egotism and ignorance displayed are equal to it. Because it is not true in any other than an abstract metaphysical sense, that there is nothing new under the sun, it is not true that things move in ever-recurring circles. Newness, in the sense in which mortals must understand the term, is a requisite condition of life, and is not absent save from dying nations. The Hebrews knew very little of the new, and practically their system ignored the theory of new systems and ideas growing up; they believed themselves to be in full possession of all which mortals could need, and consequently came easily to the conclusion of there being no possibility of further progress; but we have learnt the greater truth that if a nation cannot work out a new life it must perish.

Then follows the celebrated attack upon knowledge—the decrying of wisdom, “I, the Preacher, was King over Jerusalem, and I gave my mind to seek and to search out with wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven, an evil business, which God has given to the sons of men with which to vex themselves. I saw all the things which are done under the sun; and behold, it was all vanity and feeding upon wind. That which is crooked cannot by mere wisdom be made straight, nor can that which is wanting be numbered. I communed with my heart saying, Behold, I have gained more and greater wisdom than all who have been before me at Jerusalem, yea, my mind has gotten much wisdom and knowledge. And I gave my mind to know wisdom, and to know senselessness and folly; and I perceived that this also is striving after wind. For in much wisdom is much vexation, and he that increases knowledge increases sorrow.”* This passage has proved to be as pernicious in its effect as any of those which are the most loudly condemned in ancient literature, at least so when taken in connexion with what follows, where wisdom and folly are shown side by side, and the state of one is made out to be the same as the state of the other—the fool faring no worse than the wise. “Then I turned myself to behold wisdom, and senselessness, and folly. . . . I saw, indeed, that wisdom excels folly, as far as light excels darkness. The wise man’s eyes are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness; yet I perceived also that one event happens to them all. Then I said in my heart, as it happens to the fool, so it happens to me. Why, then, was I wiser than others? Then I said in my heart, This also is vanity. For there is no remembrance of the wise man more than of the fool for ever; for in the days to come shall all that now is be forgotten; and, alas! the wise man dies as well as the fool.” So he hated life, hated all his labour, found that wisdom and folly were equally vain! Why had he worked so earnestly, building and planting, beautifying, and otherwise adding to the stock of material comforts, when he must die and leave them to be enjoyed by others who may be fools? Why, then, better not labour at all. Better take no trouble in the world, either about its works or ways, but just go on as if we were the all. “There is nothing

* Eccles. i. 12-16.

"better for a man than to eat and drink, and let his soul enjoy good in his labour." All comes from God, and the secret of happiness is to enjoy and care not, for God gives pleasure to these who will eat and drink, but heaps care and pain upon all who will care for the morrow.

The doctrine here laid down is undoubtedly the doctrine of gross selfishness, and disregard of the interests of others. All the modern evangelical spiritual explanations fail in their aim of either modifying the Epicureanism or in toning down the theory of selfishness which is made the corner stone of happiness, and as if the writer feared some philosopher would come with other doctrines and win away his converts, he proceeds in the third chapter to bolster up his ideas by enforcing the doctrine of fatalism, "all things have their courses; their appointed time, their fixed period. There is a time for smiles and a time for tears; there is a time fixed for killing and a time for healing;" or, in other words, he means to say that all things that happen were ordained to happen long ago. They do not happen by accident, neither are they brought about by independent human agency, but all were immutably fixed, and hence the question, seeing that all things are already resolved, why should we trouble ourselves about the evils and miseries of others? "What profit has he that labours from that with which he wearies himself?" Yes, what profit? Poor, miserable worm, what canst thou do? Canst thou change the course of nature or modify the condition of man? How shalt thou do this when thou art but a child of circumstances, and canst not make one hair white or black? Toil on and wake up to learn that all thy toil is valueless, and that through toil thou hast lost the pleasures which would have been thine. Toil on for the good of others, and give thy whole life away in order to win them a measure of good, but be sure in the end, says the Preacher, that thou shalt discover not only that they have not been benefited through thy labour and pain, but also that thou hast really inflicted evil upon thyself. Hence he repeats his advice, and enforces it as the result of his experience that "there is nothing better for a man than that he should rejoice and enjoy good his life long," and all the means of happiness are supplied by God. The Preacher never preaches Atheism, but always a low form of Theism. "When a man eats and drinks, and enjoys good through all his labour, this is the gift of God. I know that whatever God does, that shall be for ever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it; and God does it that men may fear before Him. That which is, was long ago, and that which is to be has already been, and God recalls that which is past." Therefore, O, Man, let thine heart rejoice in the good things of life; for although this is vanity, yet all else is also vanity, and there is no good or free thing under the sun which thou canst either alter, improve, or bring into another condition. God alone does all.

This, however, is but the opening, and, as many critics urge, "is nothing more than the utterance of a lofty spirit which is dissatisfied with the existing condition of things." It is not the whole, "but only a part, and, indeed, is but a showing up of that one side of general scepticism which affects the ardent, inquiring mind, and which needs such medicines as are administered in the three opening chapters."* If medicines are to be employed with a view to healing, then, indeed, those of the three opening chapters are strangely selected, for, to my mind, they seem better adapted to killing than curing. Their sole aim is to paralyse all our active powers, and the close of the third chapter has, in too many cases, achieved a success. We go out into the world, and looking as young students upon the phases of life, are apt to draw conclusions which our experience afterwards reveals to be unsound. There is injustice holding up its head and treading with its heels upon the weak and the innocent, nor do we see that power is at our disposal to check the wrong-doer and set the guiltless free. We see this, and are sorrowful; but, anon, the conviction rises in the mind that this wrong action will not ever continue, and that He who seeth in secret will do justice in the end to the wronger and the wronged. This thought rising up in the mind of earnestly inquiring youth,

* Wade on "The Preacher," p. 259, edit. 1743.

works for good, and prevents the spread of doubt and disgust, so that our power to work for good is not destroyed. But the author of this book does his best to destroy the impression, and thus to cut away the last plank upon which youth sees any security. He says:—"Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice there was iniquity, and in the place of righteousness iniquity. "Then said I in my heart, God will judge the righteous and the wicked, for there shall be a time for every employment and for every work to be judged."* So far we have the ordinary conclusion, at least with those who have conceived the idea of a future life, and this idea he now controverts. He has mocked at change, at the thought of wisdom, at the hope of ultimate good achieved through labour, and now proceeds to deride the idea of ultimate justice, by arguing that there is no immortality for man. And this he asserts in language so plain, that while desirous of rendering the full meed of justice to others, I have long felt no man can fairly understand in any other sense than that I now state. The words are unmistakable, and as if to render it impossible for them to be understood in any other sense, he elsewhere repeats the ideas, and thus does his best to annihilate the hopes of immortality.

The passage I allude to is found in the same chapter, and is as follows:—"I said in my heart, concerning the sons of men, that God will prove them, and see that they are like the beasts. For that which befalls the sons of men, befalls also the beasts; one lot befalls both. As the one dies, so dies the other. Yea, there is one spirit in them, and a man has no pre-eminence over a beast; for all is vanity. All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all turn to dust again. "Who knows the spirit of man whether it goeth upward, and the spirit of a beast whether it goeth downward to the earth? And so I saw that there is nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his labours, for that is his portion. For who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?"† I repeat my conviction, that the ideas in this passage are so distinct that I cannot see how, consistently with truth, any reasoning man can understand it otherwise than as denying the immortality of the soul. And yet I find men asserting that "there is here a distinct admission of man's immortality." Chalmers uses these words, but, certainly, any man who now used the same words, would be treated as denying what Chalmers, and a host of others, say is here admitted. What is meant by the absolute assertion "That man is like unto the beast. Yea, there is one spirit in them, and a man has no pre-eminence over a beast. All go to one place"? To say that this is "a distinct admission of man's immortality," is simply to make a complete mockery of human language, and to reverse the ideas it conveys. The immortality of the soul was not only not believed by the writer, but was positively denied; he did not merely take the negative side and say, that as a tenet he did not believe it, but the positive side, and declared that it was not true. And in doing this, he only imitated many, nay, the majority, of his Hebrew countrymen. They believed not in the heathen doctrine, for the "Pagans" were the first who taught it. As we have seen, it was believed by the Egyptians, and it is only natural to suppose that some traces of it remained amongst the Jews, not as a religious dogma, but as a philosophical idea upon which to speculate. Other nations with whom the Hebrews came in contact also believed it, and hence it was that gradually a sect arose who, as in the time of Christ, believed in the doctrine. So that although we say this author repudiated what is now one of the fixed religious ideas, we do not question his Hebrew orthodoxy, or charge him with perversion, from the common thought of his time and country.

* Eccles. iii. 16.

+ Ibid. 18-22.

(To be continued.)

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OR, AN ENGLISH RECTOR IN SEARCH OF A CREED.

A TALE; BY P. W. P.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LESTER FAMILY.

HERE, before plunging into the sea of narrative required in order to display the character of our hero, it will be for the convenience of the reader that the history of the Lester family shall be fairly stated. George, or Colonel Lester, as he was more generally called, was the younger son of a younger son of one of the best and bravest of our old English squires. He had gentle blood in his veins but no money in his purse. His father was as brave a soldier as any who fought on the field of Plassy, and equal in honour to the best that ever wore mail. As with the Napiers, valour seemed to run in the family blood; but, unhappily, speculation had shivered their fortunes. Our hero's great-grandfather was one of the wealthiest men in England—a man who used to boast of its being in his power to endow each of his nine children with a ducal fortune; which was true enough, but they never received aught. Born in the year 1697, he was but twenty-three years of age when the South Sea Bubble burst, spreading consternation and ruin through the country. More through accident than good management, although then in possession of his large estates, he had escaped being involved in that catastrophe, and ever afterwards Squire Lester used to chuckle over the "judgment he had displayed in keeping his fingers out of that fire." On one occasion, when dining with the elder Gibbon, he roughly, but good-naturedly, asked, "how, as a business man, he could have been led into joining such a pack of thieves, to be robbed and mocked by them as he had been." The father of the historian replied, that he "had been duped because of taking the word, and reputed characters, of men as being worthy of all credit;" to which he added that, "they who conceived themselves the least liable to be defrauded were not unfrequently made the heaviest victims." The old squire answered with a good-humoured, self-satisfied laugh, declaring that he was not to be taken in by words or current reputations; but, before twelve months had passed, he woke up one

December morning to find that his bank had stopped payment, his gentleman steward had fled, and that he was poorer by nearly a quarter of a million than he had been when he retired to rest on the preceding night.

Poor, although still rich comparatively, his mirth and liberality went together; for from that hour all his efforts were directed to the task of refilling the treasure chests of his family. The younger sons were now informed, that, to win bread, before eating it, was their first duty; and Raymond, the youngest of all, then about eighteen, made his way to India, where, as a follower of Clive, he saw service, gained wealth, and, in a somewhat painful manner, discovered that he had a liver. He was in Trichinopoly, under the brave Laurence, when it was besieged by the French in 1754, and was one of that glorious little band which suddenly turned out to resist and conquer the party that, during the night, had entered the city by escalade, and who conceived the victory to be already won when they marched through the streets—not knowing what Harrison, Lester, and others had in store for them. It was frequently said of him, after his return to England, that he was one of the twenty-three who, in 1756, escaped suffocation, out of one hundred and forty-six, confined in the black hole, or fortress-dungeon, of Fort-William, in Calcutta; but that was a popular error; for although he might have been, he was not there, and simply because of having been sent away from Fort William “on service” when Surajah Dowlah began his attack. But although he was not there during that night of agony so minutely described by Holwell, he was present when the brave Clive, stirred to action by that atrocious crime, captured Calcutta itself, thus redeeming Fort William and restoring British ascendancy. Not long after he took part as one of the 750 Englishmen who fought in the battle of Plassy, when not only Bengal but the reversion of all India was won for the British nation. The night before the day of battle Captain Lester was sadly annoyed on hearing that Clive had called a Council of War—the only one he ever called—which decided upon a retreat. It was perfectly true, as urged by many who argued for retreating, that they had but 2500 natives to assist their own force of 750 Britons in fighting an army composed of 68,000 native soldiers; but, as Raymond Lester conclusively asked, “what use could there be in counting noses at a time like that, when it was the spirit of the men not their numbers which should be estimated.” Grumbling at his hard fate, he began to retreat, but returned at double-quick time when the news came hurrying on that “Clive would fight,” no matter what any Council said against it. The battle was gloriously fought, and Clive thanked Lester upon the field for the heroism he had displayed. He deserved it all; but while fighting bravely, he overlooked not that his object in going to India was to find a fortune; and in the latter pursuit he succeeded so well that, when the commission was on its way instructing and authorising Warren Hastings to act as Governor-General, Raymond Lester was sailing the Indian Ocean on his return home, laden with wealth and crowned with honour.

In the year 1775, at the age of 37, Captain Raymond Lester led Louise, the accomplished second daughter of Colonel Vansley to the altar, “when,” as the newspapers said, “in presence of a numerous and brilliant party, they were married at St. George’s, Hanover Square,” and from that period up to the close of 1786, the said Louise boasted each year of having given another Lester to the world. There was nothing remarkable in their married life; Captain Lester ate curry, re-fought his battles over his Port, was frequently heard to

complain of his leg (from which a ball had been extracted after Plassy), and paid his medical attendant a considerable sum annually for attending to his liver, which appeared to need a deal of regulating. It was nearly the close of 1786 when the last son of the brave Captain was born, to whom, out of compliment or gratitude to King George the Third, who, just before that happy event, at a levee, had inquired kindly of Lester about "his liver," the name of "George" was given. According to the custom of the age, especially with the Church and Crown party, the child in due course was taught to look up to his king with an amount of reverence little inferior to that with which he was to look up to his God. Such was the lesson, but the pupil was not an apt learner. Not that he ever became what is called "a liberal," such a profession he scouted as alike unworthy the character of a scholar and a gentleman; he was only a discontented Tory, and had the modern system been in vogue of adopting the measures while denouncing the principles of political opponents, there is no reason to doubt of George Lester having voted for the liberal measures.

Captain Raymond Lester was wealthy, but hardly capable of fairly estimating the nature of various speculations in which he was induced to embark his money. The close of the last century was fatal to the wealth of thousands. A wild revolutionary flame had spread over Europe, which operated to cramp trade, and finally ruined many of the best and most honourable merchants. Although not a trader in the strict sense, Lester suffered with others, and in one case, in consequence of the abstraction or destruction of a set of valuable deeds, he found himself minus, not only of all the profit he had realised since his return from the East, but of a considerable portion of his original capital. The men, learned in legal affairs, who were consulted, gave it as their opinion, that a court of law would restore what he had lost; but, although, through the pressing solicitations of his friends, he acted upon the legal advice, his forebodings of the future were very gloomy. He dreaded a Chancery suit even more than a return of his liver complaint. This happened in the year 1801, and believing his son George to be as able to push his fortune in India as himself had been, he applied for and obtained him a commission, hence it was that a second fortune-seeking Lester, while yet a mere boy, landed at Bombay, just when the fame of Tippoo Saib and a knowledge of the Mahrattas was being spread over the world.

It cannot be said that the young officer was a soldier by choice, very few Englishmen are so. They have a marvellous power of adapting themselves to circumstances, and when soldiering becomes a duty, they can don the regimentals and perform the duties as well as others can who take more naturally to it, and generally speaking a great deal better. Lester had received an abundance of cautions before leaving home, the object of his father evidently being to teach him how to avoid contracting a liver complaint, which he declared to have been the curse of his life. The young soldier did not absolutely forget or under-estimate all those sage advices, but although particularly temperate in his habits, he did not reduce many of them to practice. He never indulged in mess-table revelry, being preserved from that by a wild, and ill-regulated, antiquarian curiosity. He had no system of study, but was moved by a love of the antique and marvellous, and this led him to devote all his spare hours to the examination of whatever was near him of the remains of Ancient India. He had not been many hours in Bombay before his arrangements were complete for visiting the islands and cave temples of Salsette and Elephanta. And in after years, while exhibiting to admiring

visitors the fragments he had brought away from them, nothing pleased him better than to have a listener who cared to hear his description of their form and character.

"Sir," he used to say, "the temple of Salsette is a most wonderful work—most wonderful; and, all things considered, I believe it to be superior to that of Aboo Simbel itself. The portico and area are fifty-one feet deep, and the temple beyond is ninety feet long and thirty-eight wide, and of a proportionable height, the whole being hewn out of the solid rock, so as to form an oblong square, with a fluted concave roof; the area is divided into three aisles in regular colonnades, and two rows of columns form the spacious area in the centre, leaving a narrow walk between the columns and the wall. Some of the pillars are sculptured in a masterly style, but there are no idols. The only figures being elephants and other animals, or flowers and fruits. Then, going away from this rock-work, up winding stairs in all directions, the explorer is led to smaller cell-like excavations, which I have been told were places in which the priests resided."

That "I have been told" always came to his aid when any difficulty existed. He scarcely ever spoke positively upon such topics, and for the obvious reason, that he never devoted himself with sufficient diligence to solve any of the curious problems connected with the remarkable places he visited. He never thought it a trouble to go one or two hundred miles out of his way in order to visit a great work of art, or a miracle of nature; and when he had arrived, he sat down to enjoy the scene with all the wonder and joy of innocent childhood. He asked himself why they were as he saw them, what their origin and value, and doubtless found an answer which satisfied himself, but this was rarely communicated to others. He shrunk from saying, "I know this or that," and was content, after describing what he had seen, to give the solution of the riddle which had been furnished by others.

This was so, too, even when, having made up his mind upon the point, he disagreed with the common opinion, which was indicated by the tone in which he cited it. Thus, when describing the famous temple of Elephanta, situated, as he told his listeners, about two leagues from Bombay, he was wont to say, "Yes, that temple, with the adjoining apartments, measures 220 feet in length and 150 in breadth; but it is too low for its length—much too low. There are four rows of massive columns cut out of the solid rock, uniform in their order, and placed at regular distances, so as to form three magnificent avenues from the principal entrance to the grand idol, which terminates the middle vista. The central image is composed of three colossal heads, reaching nearly from the floor to the roof, a height of fifteen feet. It represents the threefold deity, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, in their mythological garbs, as creator, preserver, and destroyer, and the faces are faithful to the indicated characters. And yet, Sir," he would exclaim to his listener, "they say that it is a Buddhist temple." Evidently he did not believe the statement, but when pressed to state what he believed of its antiquity and original use, he usually declined, and observed, "it is a question upon which I am not prepared to speak;" though upon one occasion he advised a chronological sermon-builder to go to Ellora and Elephanta, before preparing another discourse.

But although he pryed so diligently into all the secret, sacred, and wonderful places, he failed not in performing his duties as a soldier. His introduction to the military life was a rough one, for it was that of going through the war with Mysore, followed by that with the Mahrattas. It was the good

fortune of this young officer to serve under Colonel Wellesley, and he did so with spirit, both with sword and tongue. There were many who declaimed against making war upon Tippoo Saib, but he invariably cut them short by saying, "I don't understand the politics of India, nor, indeed, those of any other country, but I know that all the great guns cast by Tippoo are ornamented with representations of a tiger devouring an Englishman, and I don't want to hear any farther proofs to satisfy me that he is our bitter enemy." This one fact, full of meaning and unmistakable, was conclusive evidence for himself and for others; nor can it be wondered at that, even in our own time, it is the grand overt act cited by historians against the ruler of Mysore. Lester dashed into the city of Seringapatam, when Baird, mounting the parapet of the siege works said, "Come, my brave fellows, follow me, and prove yourselves worthy the name of British soldiers"; he was with the foremost when, in presence of that terrible cannonade, they crossed the river, leapt the ditch, mounted the breach, and planted their colours on its summit; neither did he shrink from the terrible duties of the day until, standing before the palace, he perceived the two boy princes delivered to General Baird as prisoners, and knew that their father, Tippoo, was dead.

Even here his characteristic features were displayed, for, while the army was busy looking for plunder, Lester was "hunting after something worth preserving," and when he obtained "a portion of the dress in which Tippoo was slain," he felt far prouder of the rag than his companions were of their rupees, and other costly spoil they had gathered together.

When the Mahratta war opened he was still serving with Wellesley, but being severely wounded in the battle of Assaye, he had to undergo the annoyance of being long away from the sphere of action. Fortunately it was no worse, as so many feared it would be. He had a long rest on the sick-list, and at length returned to England. It was through that wound he enjoyed the opportunity of taking part in the Napoleonic wars of Europe; he was engaged in the Peninsula, and was present at Quatre Bras and Waterloo. But although he had distinguished himself on several occasions, he never rose higher than Colonel, and for the simple reason that being of a proud spirit he would neither purchase nor beg. He maintained, with more of logical force than was common in his speeches, as well as with more than his usual warmth, that it was the duty of the superior officer to discover who deserved promotion; and that none save those who were thus designated should be exalted. Many a battle of words and letters he fought in defending that opinion; when, as a rule, the old officers who had risen by service were usually upon his side, and the young ones, who had purchased in, were found on the opposite. On one occasion, when he had recommended a brave non-commissioned officer as being worthy of a commission, which, with many apologies, was refused, and a beardless, useless puppy was sent, he, which was rare with him, broke out into swearing about the curse of the purchase system, and protested that as soon as he could honourably do so, he would retire from the service.

This threat was shortly afterwards carried into effect, and in the year 1816 Colonel Lester, having inconsistently "sold out," was free to go up and down the world as he pleased. Fortunately he was an excellent linguist, and being essentially a closely-observing man, he was capable of undertaking offices of trust and secrecy connected with Government missions. He was employed by the Government at the time when he made his voyage up the Nile, and brought away, among other things, a fragment of sculptured stone from the

sacred island of Philæ, pieces of a broken column from El Karnac, and a curious pitcher from Memphis. When in China, although, so far as he was permitted to see them, deeply interested in the manners and customs of that curious people, he betrayed the most anxious desire to obtain pieces of the oldest porcelain, and, judging from his satisfied air when exhibiting his treasures, his collection in this particular was priceless; but they who were more familiar with that curious country always shook their heads incredulously, and spoke mysteriously of his having found John Chinaman too much for him.

Years passed away and still he was a wanderer; he had crossed the Himalayas and had gone as far up the Andes as the most adventurous traveller; he had visited the land of Montezuma, and explored the caves of Kentucky; he had seen the wild waters dashing over the rocky ledges of Niagara, hunted through the chief part of a Canadian winter, and had explored the untrodden portions of Iceland. Here and there had he explored and gathered treasure, not even omitting a fair share of the yellow gold which the world values so highly; yet it must be confessed that, with all his real and imaginary wealth, there was a void in his heart. A profound sense of dissatisfaction crept over him when, from a rocky ledge in Switzerland, he one day looked down upon the quiet village below, where, in the sunshine, fathers were at play with their little ones, or mothers were busy performing their domestic labours. "And I," said he mournfully and half aloud, "I have none to love me. I am alone!"

From that hour his passion for travel subsided, and in its place there came the desire to settle down and "enjoy the fruits of all his labours." Years before, when on the sick-list he had reached England from India, he had worshipped at a shrine, but dared not then speak of setting up his rest. The fair face he had looked upon came oft to visit him in his dreams. Yet curiously enough, never once had he fairly asked himself the question, whether there was any likelihood of his being able to add that face to his treasures. Now, however, it was difficult to find him engaged in any other occupation than that of trying to solve the problem, "if Ella Marston was married; and if not, then, was it probable she would consent to become Mrs. Lester?" Within a fortnight he was in England, and had done the wisest act of his life, he had seen the lady, and obtained her answer to the question.

Ella Marston was the daughter of a good country clergyman, whose decease, some eleven months before Colonel Lester returned to England, had left her not in poverty, but still with only an annuity of £130 a-year, which, in consequence of a deathbed charge upon it, was little enough to meet her actual wants. She was a most accomplished woman, and had she been endowed with fortune, the proudest in the land would have felt flattered in making her his duchess-bride. The absence of wealth made all the difference, although not in the number of her admirers. Lordly ones who could not so far violate the law of gain as to make her a wife, allowed themselves to dwell upon the thought of possessing her in a more questionable form; but none of them ever found sufficient courage to advance far enough to hint their thoughts. There was something about her, a certain purity and dignity of character and mien, which compelled even the more practised in the art of winning favour to refrain from expressing the thoughts of their hearts; and thus she had succeeded in passing so far through life without being called upon to pour forth that scorn of baseness which constituted one of the chief features in her character.

Lester and Ella had met upon the Welsh mountains, where he was recruiting his health, she staying on a visit with a friend. He was regularly introduced, and they, being both from Hampshire, became companions. He spake not of love, but told of India and what he had seen; she listened to his narratives with the real interest of one who loves to gather information, and when the time came that he resolved upon going to the wars, she first became aware of how deeply her heart was engaged. Still neither by word nor sign did she treat him as being anything more than a valued friend, but it was with unfeigned pleasure she heard of his intent to send her occasional notices of what he had seen, and the places he visited. For some time he did so, and his letters were duly answered; but as both shifted their residences, the letters miscarried, when mutually they arrived at the conclusion that some tender passion had interfered to break up the correspondence. Such was the first conviction, but on her part there was a strong disinclination to believe it. She heard twice of his being in England, still unmarried; and, although unuttered, the idea was in her mind that at some future time they twain would meet again.

At the time when Colonel Lester returned, fully resolved to settle down and become a family man, she was spending a few weeks near Hastings, with a female relative, who had recently married an officer, with whom Lester had some slight acquaintance. He was not long in discovering her whereabouts, and within six months from that date (in the year 1820) Ella Marston had become Mrs. Lester. Immediately he had her consent, as his friend was returning to his Southampton residence, Lester proceeded thither, obtained a lease of the house to which the reader has already been introduced, and resolved upon arranging the history of his life upon the walls of his sleeping apartment. He worked at it from morning till night, and would not accept any assistance. That and the organ were the only pieces of work of his own designing he ever really completed. He began poems, histories, novels, and other works, but never completed them. Satisfied with the design when finally arranged in his own mind, he lacked the plodding perseverance required for working it out upon paper. At any time he would rather ride ten miles to carry a message than sit down to write and direct a letter containing its purport. Still, when commanded to perform any duty, no man ever obeyed with nicer exactness or greater completeness.

Colonel Lester was in his thirty-second year, and Ella Marston in her twenty-sixth, when they married. In this instance, the custom of adding a Lester to the family every year was violated, for the addition was biennial, so that when their last son, George, was born, in the year 1829, they looked around upon a family of three sons, and exactly the same number of daughters. During the early years of their married life they were comparatively rich, but having lost a considerable sum in the panic of 1825, and more some time after in consequence of it, and not wishing to reduce their establishment, Colonel Lester invested all his property in purchasing annuities for each member of his family. This was effected in the year 1827, shortly after their son William was born, and at a time when both parents imagined they had counted the last of their children. As is not uncommonly the case, this proved to be incorrect; and then, as the Colonel used to say of George, "Poor boy, he was born into a world in which there was nothing for him." The parents, however, found consolation in the idea that, by husbanding their income, enough could be saved to fit him out equally with the rest; but, as fate would have it, in the year 1833 fever entered the house, and succeeded

in depriving it of four beautiful children, leaving none but Ella and George. At the same time, his friends the Paysons died, leaving their daughter to Lester's care. The poor Colonel never recovered the shock these losses gave to his system, for, although he lived up to the year 1842, he was gradually declining, and then died of bronchitis. Mrs. Lester carefully husbanded her small means, and had been so successful that she accumulated a fund more than large enough to enable her son George to attend the University, where, as she said, she hoped he would incline to enter the Church. One of her reasons, that which she assigned when dying, the reader is already acquainted with, but another was the promise from an old friend of a good living in his gift when it became vacant. She had dwelt upon this, also, because of the fact that the Colonel had once ventured some remarks about religion and the clergy which deeply pained her. She saw what was in his mind, and feared for her sons, as if freethought were a contagious disease. But she died in peace upon that score, and now it remains for us to show what George Lester endured in the endeavour to observe the pledge he had given.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XXIV.

WYCLIFFE AS THE REFORMER.

THE fact that the doctrines promulgated by Wycliffe, in reference to the authority of priests, and the wealth of the Church, were of a popular character, naturally gained him many followers in a time when a strong democratic feeling was growing up in the English mind, afterwards to find expression in Wat Tyler and Jack Straw insurrections, and to be crushed by fire and sword, when, as ere long was the case, Kingcraft and Priestcraft entered into league against the people. As yet, however, this unholy alliance had not been effected—in England at least—and Wycliffe was supported no less by the policy of the Court than by the love of the people. Thousands accompanied him on the occasion of his attendance at Lambeth, in obedience to the citation of the Archbishop, and surrounded the Chapel. Large numbers forced their way into it after him, and did not fail to let the assembled priests know that they had better deal gently with the accused. What the upshot would have been we know not, for, ere long, a message arrived from the Court ordering them to put an end to their proceedings, and let Wycliffe depart in peace. Walsingham, the monkish chronicler, cannot restrain his indignation at this, and records how "they trembled as shaken reeds before the wind;" how "their speech became softer than oil; to the public loss of their own dignity" and the damage of the whole Church;" and how they became "as a man" that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs." Yes, even so; and for this time the intended victim of priestly wrath became the victor.

So Wycliffe departed, not however, without strict injunctions from the Archbishop, that he should henceforth desist from his teachings. How he obeyed this injunction we have now to see. He had not failed to see how successful the itinerant preachings of the Mendicants had been in spreading error among the people; and he determined to put in force machinery of a similar kind, for the spread of truth. In his capacity of University Professor, he had been enabled to exercise a great influence over a large number of young men; many of these, on account of their profession of Wycliffe's views, but more of them from a conscientious objection to resort to the means usually adopted to obtain benefices, were without livings, and without

the chance of obtaining any. These, to the number of some hundreds, were enrolled by Wycliffe into a body of itinerant preachers, who should go about preaching against the superstitious taught by the Friars. "These poor priests, as they were called," says the Church historian, "made the tour of the kingdom, performing the sacerdotal functions, preaching in town or village, at fair or market, wherever a congregation could be found to listen, denouncing the prevalent corruptions, inculcating the practical claims of Christianity, pronouncing absolution on the truly contrite without fee or reward, sowing spiritual things, and content to receive in return the smallest portion of carnal things, and proving to their hearers, like the Apostle, and unlike the Friars, that they 'sought not theirs, but them.'"^{*} This, saving the ecclesiastical phraseology in which it is couched, may be looked upon as a pretty accurate statement of the work they did. They, and their master, Wycliffe, must be looked upon in the light of moral Reformers; or it was from that side that Wycliffe's attacks upon the Papacy and the Hierarchy had hitherto proceeded. These "poor priests," and those whom their preachings convinced, became afterwards known by the name of "Lollards," a term signifying "psalm-singers." By their aid the followers of Wycliffe became so numerous, that, as a contemporary historian states, "a man could not meet two people on the road but one of them was a Lollard." In fact, the disciples of Wycliffe continually increased in numbers from this time forth.

A real Saxon hate of foreign dominion, and an earnest revolt against the corruption fostered by the Church, had made Wycliffe a Reformer; as yet, so far as doctrine is concerned, he was not a heretic, or rather, not more a heretic than the pure-minded in the Roman Church had ever been. It is a remarkable fact, and one which at the time gained him many followers, that he showed out of the writings of Bernard, who of all men could be the least suspected of heresy, that his opinions, and those of the Abbot of Clairvaux, were identical. Hitherto Wycliffe had attacked the Church as a moral Reformer only; but as a man of independent thought, it was quite certain that he would not remain in that stay throughout his life. It is somewhat singular that the course taken by Wycliffe, was almost an exact parallel with that taken by Beranger three centuries before. Beranger had started by decrying the moral depravity of the clergy and denouncing the Papacy, he had taught the necessity of restoring Christianity to its primitive simplicity, and in turning to doctrine he had attacked the monstrous dogma of transubstantiation; an exactly similar course was taken by Wycliffe, in his mental development, as a Reformer. His was the revolt of the moral sense, and when he became a heretic, it was the doctrine of transubstantiation that he declared against. Let it not be thought wonderful that he delayed long before he enunciated his belief on this head. Since the time of Beranger, the Papal power had greatly increased; all over Europe the Church now sought to coerce men to acknowledge her authority in matters of doctrine; the crusade against the Albigenses, with the establishment of the Inquisition, had introduced the Reign of Terror in the Church. Englishmen, too, were exceedingly tender on the point of doctrine; and no heresy had as yet appeared in the Anglo-Romish Church. Wycliffe, in the presence of the dangers, and of the doubt whether he would find any to listen, might well hesitate before he made up his mind to attack the doctrinal teachings of the Church.

^{*} Baxter. Church History of England, p. 315.

Wycliffe, however, was no coward; and once having satisfied himself that the truth was with him he hesitated no longer, but boldly declared that common sense and the authority of the Church were at variance in the doctrine of the Eucharist; nor was it long before loyalty to Reason led him still further. So far, in fact, that even in these days the Reform he sought to carry out remains unaccomplished; for the English Reformation was (as we shall see when we come to treat of it, and of the actors in it,) carried out in a spirit very different from that of Wycliffe. A heretic now; behold! those who have been with him hitherto fall away. Old John of Gaunt advises him not to meddle with doctrine. "But truth demands, my lord!" "I leave the settlement of truth to the Church, and you had better do the same." Well, let him go! Wycliffe will be true to his own conscience. But the hardest blow has yet to come. The University which has been with him through all now deserts him; but Wycliffe is true to himself and his God. Expelled from his Professor's chair, struck off the College books, he retires to Lutterworth. Yes, brave old man that he is, he retires, not, however, to escape the battle, but to send forth defiance to his enemies.

The first thing that Wycliffe will do will be to send forth a complete translation of the Bible—that book which hitherto has been a sealed book. The people shall judge for themselves, as to whether judged by the book to which Priests appeal (well knowing that not one in ten thousand can answer the appeal), he or the Church teach the truth. An appeal to private judgment there shall be, and every man shall be his own priest in this matter. This is the position assumed by Wycliffe; and we look upon that translation of the Bible made by him as the grandest proof of the thorough honesty and greatness of the man. Of course an immensity of cant and twaddle has been talked by "Evangelicals" in reference to this matter, and we are told how Wycliffe placed the "blessed Word of God" in the hands of the "benighted Papists." Yes! he did, and he placed it there without a commentary of his own. Brothers, there are Protestant Papists as well as Roman Catholic ones; and we, at least, fail to see the difference between the Priestcraft which seeks to hide the Book, and that which seeks to hide its meaning. Consider the matter honestly, and it must be admitted that Popery is found in Protestant chapels and churches, no less than in those of the Roman Catholic communion. The greatness of Wycliffe lay in the thorough spirit of religious freedom which pervaded his whole lifework, and which made him now say to men, Here is the Book to which both I and the Church appeal; read it and judge for yourselves!

Now there goes forth a cry against him; now is Priestcraft sure that it has him on the hip: and circumstances favour its nefarious designs. Every one knows the story of Wat Tyler, and the insurrection arising out of the attempt to levy an unjust poll-tax, unauthorised by Parliament. This rising of the people was represented by the clergy as the result of Wycliffe's doctrines; and the Court, exulting in their victory over the people by the suppression of the revolt, issued a Royal Ordinance, enabling Courtney (now Archbishop of Canterbury, his predecessor having been murdered by the mob) to take measures to put down heresy and schism. Parliament protested in vain, for Richard II. has entered on that career of tyranny which will end in his ruin. A Synod, held at the monastery of the Grey Friars, took the matter of Wycliffe's heresy in hand. Their first meeting was disturbed by an earthquake and a fearful thunder-storm, and but for the firmness of the Archbishop this would have stopped all further proceedings. He, however,

assured his trembling colleagues that it was not God's wrath (as they supposed), but the earth purging herself of heresy. This Synod at the Grey Friars must be looked upon as the commencement of the Inquisition and the reign of persecution in England, and Courtney as the man who presided at the birth. Two-and-twenty years, however, were to elapse before it was found possible to indoctrinate the English Parliament, or reconcile the English people to the making persecution lawful; and to find the explanation of the fact, that this ever became possible, we have to look to the political events of the time. Courtney, who had taken to himself the style and title of Inquisitor-General, would gladly have burned Wycliffe now, but the time was not ripe. The Synod, however, condemned his doctrines as heretical and blasphemous; for which he cared but little.

There has been between the various sects a pretty little quarrel, as to what was the precise character of Wycliffe's opinions and doctrines, whether were he a believer in the efficacy of good works, or an Antinomian? were his views of Church polity Episcopalian or Presbyterian? and long disquisitions have been written, proving him, on the one hand, to have been a high Churchman, and on the other, a Dissenter of an ultra-dissident character. Into these frivolous though vexed questions we will not enter (although it may be certainly stated that he was no Episcopalian); for what matters it what his speculative opinions were, when we know that he had a hearty hatred of vice and immorality; was a staunch lover of religious freedom, and in every sense an honest man? His condemnation by the Synod was forwarded to the Pope, who thereupon summoned Wycliffe to attend before him. From this Wycliffe wisely excused himself; if, indeed, his age and growing infirmities were not such as to preclude compliance, as he stated they were. We say wisely, for to have obeyed would have been to take a journey for the purpose of being burnt as a heretic; and though, from the bold outspokenness of the man, his constant unswerving adherence to what he looked upon as true, there is no doubt he would have been prepared to meet a martyr's doom in England, had it overtaken him, he judged it neither necessary nor right to go to Rome to meet it. No! he would stay in England and work; and work he did, broken down by disease though he was. A brave old age was that of Wycliffe's—ever writing and speaking in defence of the cause he had at heart; fearing neither the machinations of his enemies, nor the assaults of disease. Sermon after sermon, pamphlet after pamphlet, let Priestcraft know that he was neither dead nor conquered; and when at last Death came to summon him away, he found him at his Master's work.

JAS. L. GOODING.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 11.—DEATH OF SAKYA.

SAKYA enjoyed many years of life, during which he continued to teach; but at length felt that he must die. He probably felt as one who had done those things which should secure him in immortal blessedness, but was certain he would have to pass away from his disciples on earth. Though the certainty of Buddhahood had been obtained, death could not be avoided. Nay, when that had arrived, after he had taught for forty-five years, he had no fear that in passing away his doctrines would pass away and die with him. His

disciples were all solemnly assembled, and he pressed upon them the importance of their then asking questions, if it should be that they were in any doubt with regard to the actual meaning of those things which he had taught them. See them as they stand around—they weep, but they do not answer; for, indeed, they are filled with sorrow, too big for words, that the teacher—"the Divine One," as they called him—is about to quit them. Yet they were not kept in the dark about this; it was no sudden surprise, for they had known it for some time past, seeing that he had predicted the very day and the hour of his decease. Such, at least, is the story believed by the Buddhists of to-day. Mara had again come to tempt the holy man, and to inquire, "as the evil sinner said," concerning his death. Sakya, without any hesitation, declared that in three months he should surely pass away, "whereat the wicked Mara was well pleased." Anando, a beloved disciple, grieved deeply at this intelligence, but Sakya comforted him, and urged how useless it was for him to live longer. "Go away, Anando, and bid them all assemble to hear my injunctions, and to prepare for my departure." They came as we have seen, and then he taught them his hymn of joy:—

"Through a long course of almost endless beings
Have I, in sorrow, sought the great Creator.
Now thou art found, O Great Artificer!
Henceforth my soul shall quit this house of sin,
And from its ruins the glad spirit shall spring,
Free from the fetters of all mortal births,
And over all desires victorious."*

The disciples were now constantly assembled together, and the aged Sakya, no longer able to stand up and address them as before, placed Anando in the pulpit to recite the written books, and to answer questions relating to the meaning of various portions. This was repeated day after day, through several weeks, and the Buddha gave what instructions suggested themselves to his mind during this long course of examination. But he was growing daily weaker, daily less capable of going out to beg the alms upon which he lived, and less able to sustain the calls made by his disciples upon his physical frame. His mind was still clear and strong, but utterance was weak, and it was evident unto all that he would soon pass away.

When Sakya intimated to his disciples that his death drew near, we are told that "the earth was troubled;" but worse was to come, and greater wonders were to be shown. The teacher, knowing that his last hour was drawing nigh, commanded his most faithful disciples to bear him out to a grove, and place him between two sala trees, where, upon a bed of leaves, he would breathe his last. The grove was then in full flower, and the air was filled with perfume. With the tenderness of a mother over her babe, they gently laid him down, and there, amid the scent of flowers, with no covering but the flowing, azure heavens, in quietude and joy, he soon breathed his last, in peace and silence. Then came the convulsions. The great earth quaked, the mountains were rent asunder; their tossings produced a degree of terror which made the hair to stand on end on brave men's heads; then, too, was heard the music of the gods ringing in the air, a blessed music to charm all hearts, and convince them of the Divine nature of Sakya. Then was sung this song: "All living creatures shall relinquish their existence in this world, and, in like manner, in this world the supreme teacher, the incomparable, the being whose advent was felicitous—the supreme Buddha

* Bhilsa Topes, 59.

"dies. . . . He endured the agony of death in the full possession of his "mental faculties; those mental faculties expired like the extinction of a "lamp. . . . Then, when he expired there was great terror. . . . Some wept "aloud, with uplifted arms; some sank upon the earth, as though they had "been stricken down; others reeled about, crying, 'Too soon, too soon has "Sakya departed; too soon has his eye closed on the world.'"

Thus there was great lamentation; yet they said he had but ascended into Nirvana, had but passed away into blessedness and peace. How they buried this man it were long to tell. Thousands attended with music, singing, and dancing; the body was prepared, the pile was raised, garlands of sweet flowers were hung about, and in the end, after many days, flame was added, and the body was consumed. Then the burnt bones were all carefully collected, and divided into eight parts, a part being handed to citizens from eight cities, who took home their share, and built topes over the relics, which stand unto this day, and have been successfully examined by Englishmen. But the Buddhists have other remains; they have his begging pot, sandals, pieces of finger-nails, hair, and, in truth, an immense stock of 'sacred remains, including numerous fine impressions of his foot. And these, like the Roman Catholic relics, are visited with pious reverence by the millions of believers, who place the same confidence in their healing virtues that the Catholics place in their assumed relics of Jesus.

Buddha's followers were now left to found their Church as a system—they were known as a congregation, or body of believers; but they resolved to become something more. To this end they held councils, and in these they discussed and settled the forms of Buddhism, as also the sacred canon, exactly the same as was done many hundred years after by the Apostles and early Christians. The first Buddhist council was held within fifty days of Sakya's death, and five hundred priests recited the whole of what he had taught, and it was there and then decided that what had been recited was to be looked upon as canonical. Other councils, however, had to decide this point anew, for writings began to abound in which pretended teachings of Buddha were given, but many were rejected, and it must be confessed that great care has been taken by the believers to preserve their books from corruption. Missionaries were sent out into foreign lands by order of the council, and these were enjoined to translate their books into the language of the peoples they taught; that they did this is clear, for in several countries the history of their labours has been discovered. They travelled far, and preached to all who would listen, and under their teacher's orders, as written in their book, they returned not reviling for reviling, but gave and did good for evil. Thus their success was certain, and now with wonder our Englishmen collect copies of the Buddhist Scriptures out of these countries, and are astonished at finding the translations so faithful to the originals. In the first synod it was discussed whether women should be admitted to the community. In the East, as a rule, woman was treated as inferior, but Sakya had always treated her with respect; he had spoken honourably of her powers. So it was resolved that they should be admitted, and also that, as there was for the men monasteries, or religious houses, so also for the women there should be nunneries. In Buddhist countries these are as numerous as in Catholic ones, and when they are heard chaunting the ritual, or singing to the Queen of Heaven, Mother of the Divine One, the stranger Catholic is in grave doubt if the people are not Catholics without knowing it. Possibly they are, but it were well for him to ask if, after all that has been said, he is not a Buddhist

without knowing it. For the likelihood is as great on the one side as on the other.

And, curiously enough, this Buddhism had its "Constantine," in a King Asaka, who first raised it to the dignity of a state religion in India. This man attained the throne by fraud, and then had all his brothers put to death, in order to cut off every chance of rivalry. Within four years of acquiring the throne he had reduced the whole of Central India to his rule, and was master from the valley of Cashmere to the banks of the Nerbudda, from the mouth of the Indus to the Bay of Bengal. After his conquests, he was induced to turn his attention to Buddhism, and, after a short study, he fully embraced it, making it the state religion of his empire. Some say that this change of religion was accompanied by a total change in his conduct, so that from being known as Asaka the Furious, he became known as Asaka the Virtuous. It may be so, yet we cannot forget that Cranmer called Henry VIII. a noble, pure, and religious king, or that the same was said, over and over again, of Constantine. And Asaka, too, shed a deal of blood, even after he became a Buddhist. Ah! yes; but that was in his civil capacity. There's the rub, for that is the excuse all persecutors and bloodshedders adduce. Still we know that this king made the necessary concessions, and was proclaimed a Buddhist; he at once dismissed the sixty thousand Brahmins formerly fed at his expense, and spent his money, as well as other people's money, very liberally in building monasteries and sacred shrines. A Chinese traveller fully confirms this statement, for, on his road from Anderab to the South of India, and from the delta of the Indus to the mouth of the Ganges, he saw fifty large topes, besides numerous temples, all ascribed to Asaka. There is no doubt, either, that many of the Buddhist cave temples, now lying in ruins, were the work of this ruler, and hence we know that the new creed must have gained great power. It had been fortunate for India, however, if Asaka had opposed, rather than supported it; for, like Christianity, it lost considerably through contact with the State. Both of them were based on ideas widely at variance with ordinary state notions, and when they were dangled upon the knee of kings, as kings, undoubtedly they contracted, through their priests, certain stains, which have never since been removed. The kings have used them to increase their own power and importance, and the unmistakable aim of their founders was directly contrary to this.

P. W. P.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

(Continued from page 368.)

BUT, looking at this passage as liberally as we can, we recognise in it the utterance of a man who is disgusted with all things, as most young men are, at least, the majority of those who read and think, of the thoughtless we say nothing. They go out into life, high in hope and full of cheerfulness, being perfectly confident that if they do but earnestly labour for good, good will inevitably follow, as the harvest follows the sower, when blessed with rain and sunshine. Then, in a little time, behold things wear a dark aspect—the clouds of disappointment gather thickly to lower upon their path; the hopes, kindled within them, are touched as

by an unkindly frost, and the seed they have sown seems to have been worse than if it were actually cast away—all their labour, and love, and sacrifice, appears to be wholly lost, and they have no reward for all their labour. It now follows with many, that despair fastens upon their hearts, all the things of earth seems to have suddenly lost their beauty, and, with subsequent mood of mind, these "injured ones" ask, Why should we continue to live? They have sought to know the truth, to divine the future, and behold, after all their trials, they have been beaten back, baffled and worn. What better, then, they ask, than to hurry out of a world which has treated them so unkindly? Thus comes the thought of suicide to the young, and by their own hands do they perish. But not all; for some of them are wise enough to tread onward until it is discovered that perhaps, after all, it may be that it is with themselves and not nature with whom the error lies. They will live and fight, and still endeavour to learn the whole truth, and, as it frequently happens with such men, they become great and good in the daily battle of life. They ultimately solve the problem in another way, than in that of suicide, and grow into the conviction that their grand error, at starting, lay in this, that they hoped too much and did not fairly estimate their own powers of resistance and endurance; they then laid the foundation of the after disappointments. The sorrow was not created for them but was brought about by themselves, and, thus enlightened in after years, they discover a beauty and glory in life, which, at first, was undreamt of. But another class remains: a class of men who still continue in life, but who can scarcely be said to live. These have paused at the verge of suicide, and, having arrived at the conclusion that to work good is impossible, they ask themselves whether there are not pleasures to be enjoyed, which it is worth living to enjoy? Shall they leave the world in disgust, or live in it, and, while looking down with supreme contempt upon the preachers of goodness, mercy, and love, enjoy the rising passions of the hour, and bask in the sunshine of pleasure. True, indeed, they say, that all is emptiness, all is vanity, all is following after the wind, yet, is not the grave vanity also? And, being so, as they cannot turn aside so as to get beyond the range of vanity, will it not be better to live and have what they can, though it be only vanity, than vainly die, and sleep the eternal sleep, as unconscious as are the earth-bound rooks, and the clods of the valley, in whose bosom they sleep.

The writer of Ecclesiastes was of this latter class. With him there was no object or emotion which bore not the impress of vanity. Life had no real sacredness, and death no vital consolation. The love of the mother and the tenderness of the bride; the merry laugh of innocent childhood, and the wise monitions of age, were alike valueless and full of vanity. So that, as he moved through the city, you could have cried after him, Behold the bloodless man, the man who recognises nothing noble, or beautiful, or good in the lives of his fellow-men! And there are men in our own age and country who endeavour to win us over to a belief in this proposition, as if it were an eternal truth; men who labour to indoctrinate us with the idea that we cannot do better than live to enjoy what is, for, as they whiningly proclaim, the hour cometh when all possibilities of enjoyment will have passed for ever away. They are cool, passionless, and hope-riven men; and when we get their real estimate of the heroisms of old, it comes to this, that it is summed up in the sentence, "They were the works of good-natured, well-meaning fools." A sneer is ever upon their lip, and contempt is written upon their countenance. Eternal truth they know not, but only know the seeming truth of their own hour. There is not a noble aim or impulse which they do not discredit, and when the pious soul speaks of an hereafter, they treat the saying as the child of a disordered fancy. Rare exceptions can possibly be cited, but, as a rule, we may say that the men who have no thought beyond the grave, soon decline into the state in which, like the writer of Ecclesiastes, they have no thought beyond themselves, and such men are as a leprosy in a nation. Here was this man looking out upon life, and seeing only emptiness and vain struggles, and his teaching sunk to the lowest we can conceive of. And here I may observe, that, as compensation seems to be the unerring law, we find it also in connection with Bible reading. It is common with

the intelligent and independent members of society to regret that the Bible is not read with the same intentness, acuteness, and critical spirit with which other books are read. And it is sorrowfully said that Bible readers go on from chapter to chapter without pausing to work out in their own minds the real principles laid down in the text. This is but too true, but in the case of Ecclesiastes the result has been that, through not pausing to think, many a pure mind has escaped the contamination of the unholy principles and immoral doctrines laid down in this book. They have read them with the physical eye only, and, fortunately, with the mental eye have not seen them. But we will rapidly glance over these objectionable teachings.

But let us see what he teaches, what are his views of life; he has gone away in thought to work the problem of life, and we will read his solutions! "So I returned, "and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the "tears of the oppressed, and they had no comforter, and, on the side of their "oppressors, there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised "the dead, which are already dead, more than the living, which are yet alive; yea, "better is he, than both they, which hath not been, who hath not seen the evil "work which is done under the sun."* Yes, he saw that, beneath the sun, there was robbery and wrong, the strong unjust trod the weak ones under their heel, and the fair creation groaned beneath the pressure of sin. The unjust ones had no power strong enough to cope with them, and pluck them from their thrones of injustice; and the weak had none to comfort them, none to cheer them in their desolation. What, then, shall be done? Shall the angel Pity alone be left to keep watch over such scenes and sufferers; or shall a voice go forth to waken the dead, and make them preach from their graves the doctrines of redemption, battle, and victory? The man who sees sin, and does not endeavour to blot it out; who sees wrong done, and strives not to punish the wrong doer; or who sees innocence bathed in suffering and sorrow, caused by the cruel conduct of oppressors, and does not pause to speak the word of hope and comfort, or to strike the blow of redemption; is he not a coward, who dishonours the life he bears? It is said that we are to honour "the Preacher," because he points out the fact that sin exists, and that wrong is daily done; but surely something more is needed in order to render a man worthy of honour. In our day, this is the ordinary course; and, although it may prove most profitable to the man's pocket to pursue such a line, it is more profitable to his soul to pour out the deserved denunciations, and of greater importance that he labours to prevent their continuance. But this is repudiated by the Preacher: he saw no advantage in labour, hence he says: "If "thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of justice and "judgment, in a province, *be not moved*, marvel not at the matter; for He that is "higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they."† Do not trouble about that oppression, neither let it wound your soul, or irritate you into adopting strong courses in order to bring about a change—it is not your suffering, it is not your wrong, so leave it to God who can see, and do not waste your time in vainly endeavouring to work a cure.

(To be continued.)

* Eccles. iv. 1-3.

† Ibid. v. 8.

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OUT OF THE CLOUD;

OR, AN ENGLISH RECTOR IN SEARCH OF A CREED.

A TALE; BY P. W. P.

CHAPTER V.

THE THREE MAN-TRAPS AT ROSE HALL.

"It is finally decided, Ella, that I travel to Crosswood on Friday. My letters this morning leave me no option; but you need not remove until next week."

"I rejoice to hear it; for, George, although I have no desire to leave this dear old home, and all our friends, still, now that you have received the gift of the rectory, and we must remove, I shall be glad when we have got settled quietly down again."

"Indeed, you cannot desire it more than I do; for, having been so long away from home, I quite luxuriate in the thought that I shall soon be able to enjoy all the advantages which the having a home of one's own confers."

"But, brother, you have not told me how it has been decided about going to the rectory-house. Shall you go direct to it, or shall you, until my arrival, set up your tent at Rose Hall with our new-found relatives—those Poinders?"

"Why, my dear sister, do you say *'those Poinders'* in that peculiar manner? They are cousins of ours, although newly found; but you seem to have conceived a dislike to them."

"I plead guilty to the charge, and yet when I tax myself to find the cause there is none I can think of. The only substantial reason I appear to have lies in this, that, although they knew our dear parents so well, the fact of their relationship was never breathed. Neither father nor mother could have suspected it; the Poinders knew all about it, but said nothing. Even when mother died, they sent only the condoling letter of ordinary friends. This conduct appears to me to have been uncandid to our parents and ungenerous to ourselves. I may judge unjustly, but it is that conduct which makes me suspect their professions of friendship."

Ella had suspicions which were far from being groundless. The Poinders

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were cousins of George and Ella. A Poinder, who had acquired wealth as a trader before undertaking to set up as a squire, had married one of the Miss Lesters of a collateral branch, but knowing that the Colonel, unto whom he had been introduced at Southampton, was not a man of wealth, he had strictly forbidden his timid wife to reveal the family connection. With the wealth of a nabob, the senior Poinder possessed the spirit of a huckster, and the toadyism of a dilapidated flunkey; he invariably remained silent when plain speaking was likely to open the way for his being troubled for money, however small the sum, and, indeed, for any other assistance; but he was ready to kiss the earth on which a man of influence stood. Now, however, that George Lester had been presented with the rectory of Crosswood, worth six hundred a year, the old trader felt not only that, as a relative, he would prove a valuable acquisition, but he had also persuaded himself that there were some great people in the background who were pushing him on. In fact, he had arrived at the conclusion that George possessed influence, and this was all he desired to learn in order to show him great kindness. Rose Hall, the country-seat of the Poinders, stood on the edge of Crosswood; and hence it was that, when the old trader knew the living had been given to George, he wrote to express his "great delight," was proud to recognise "the family connection," and was very pressing that, for a time, the young rector should reside at the hall. The younger Poinders were instructed to promote this proposal, and they wrote accordingly. Ella strongly objected to her brother going there, and was glad to hear him say,

"No, I shall not go to the hall, at least not to stay, until you come. I have written a brief letter declining, for the present, to accept their kind invitation; and, Ella, although I cannot tell why, yet I feel disquieted about their having so pointedly run down the rectory. In several of their letters they spoke of it as a sort of a dilapidated barn, a miserable shed, in which to rest would be impossible."

"And Miss Margery wrote to me, desiring I would let you know that 'her papa would not think of stabling his horses in it;' those are her words."

"It is very strange; for I have heard, from excellent sources, that the house is in pretty good condition, somewhat old-fashioned and sober, but perfectly sound and habitable."

"That is what I believe, for Jane, in her letter this morning, declares it to be a perfect Paradise, and she says that all is in readiness for our reception."

"Doubtless, Jane has let her imagination play somewhat freely; still there can be no doubt of the Poinders having exaggerated the defects, and I am at a loss to understand why."

Ella smiled archly as she observed, "But I can understand it. You lords of the creation imagine us women to be incapable of solving difficult problems, while we believe that you consider many points to be difficult which, in truth, are particularly simple. I understand their reason, and because of that, I am glad you have refused the invitation."

"Ella, do not speak in riddles, but just inform your benighted brother how the case stands. Now that breakfast is over, I will cheerfully fancy myself to be one of the wandering knights of old, and you shall be the Fairy Queen who has descended, or ascended, just as your queenship pleases, to give me instruction. Now, like a good fairy, do run on."

This was more easily commanded than done, for although Ella was particularly plain-spoken, she felt a degree of hesitation about expressing her opinions upon this matter. After a brief pause, however, she asked,

"Do you not think that three cousins, when they are what the world calls 'accomplished, lovely, and marriageable,' but rather bold, daughters, of a rich man, are dangerous companions for a young rector? I fancy myself to be sitting down and watching the pretty creatures, all so innocently waiting for a new object or source of excitement, all meditating in their hearts how they can manage matters so as to be invited out to marry, all of them so full of boarding-school poetry, and fifth-rate sentiment, so fearfully alarmed lest, peradventure, your night-cap should not have been properly aired, or your slippers might be a little damp, and yet, after all the fuss and bother, not caring a pin for your real comfort, but only about baiting their poetical and sentimental traps to catch a husband."

"Well, upon my word, you are the most uncharitable Fairy Queen that ever spake to a wandering knight."

"I don't mean to be so, because, as I gladly admit, while they are doing and speaking thus, they are partly unconscious of their own want of heart and truthfulness. Through thoughtlessness, many do such things; yet, although we may pity, we must as certainly guard against them."

"But, dear Ella, you surely cannot imagine me capable of forgetting my, or rather 'our,' Mary?"

"No, George, I know you too well for supposing anything of the kind. But these ladies of the hall are not acquainted with the fact of your engagement; and even if they were, I think that it would not greatly alter the case, unless, indeed, to render them a little more assiduous. Ladies are very severe in denouncing those of your sex who retract engagements; but they are by no means so eager to aid them in adhering to their pledges. There are many—very many—noble exceptions; but as a rule, ladies do not look upon matters matrimonial as being really settled until the Church has declared it. So that the most desperate attempts are made to carry off a prize, even at the moment when the rightful owner looks with joy upon its coming into harbour. The doctrine that all is fair in love-matters has been preached so successfully, that it has shaken the supremacy of moral justice in all affairs of the heart."

"But, Ella, are you not forgetting that, in all such cases, there are two wrong doers? You speak so mysteriously of danger, that I am inclined to believe you have forgotten all our old lessons and resolves about firmly adhering to the path of duty and honour; but, more especially, you overlook my new character, as a clergyman, which would preserve me from taking part in such proceedings."

The truth now flashed upon Ella's mind that her brother was taking all this to himself, as if she meant that he would dishonour his bond, which was about the last thought to have entered her head. At one moment her fear was lest one of the Miss Poinders should fall in love with her brother; for in her sisterly heart she was proud of Lester, and looked upon him as one who, above all others, was qualified for winning the most devoted love from any lady not positively engaged. Then, again, reverting to her suspicions, and dwelling upon what she remembered of their childish flirtations, when the Poinders were at Southampton, she feared lest her brother should innocently get entangled in some web of intrigue from which there would be no escape without pain to himself and Mary, and a tale of blighted affections for all the tea-tables round Crosswood. Wishing to disabuse his mind of the error into which he had fallen, as well as to open his eyes to a few facts about woman's life, she boldly declared the whole truth.

"I did not mean that you would become a party to their machinations, but this, that, probably, one of the Miss Poinders would be smitten, might, even, fall desperately in love with you, and then a great deal of unhappiness would follow upon both sides, and, of course, all the unpleasant small talk of a country town."

Lester could not refrain from bursting into a merry laugh. He had not a grain of vanity in his nature. And, as to the chance of any young lady falling desperately in love with him, he looked upon the theory as being perfectly absurd. It is true that he had heard the loose conversation of undergraduates, and had listened to the strange unhallowed allusions which are frequently made by gentlemen who sit over their wine when the ladies have retired; but these things never remained long enough upon his mind to corrupt his heart. He worshipped at one shrine, and admired the sex as a whole, neither believing them to be designing, nor charging them with weakness. As yet he knew woman only as he had idealized her, in which process he had been one-sidedly assisted by the specimens with whom he had grown up. And they were of the best. His mother, tender, generous, and full of that sort of feeling which is vitalized poetry, nobleness, and purity; his sister, full of thought and self-contained, alive to everything great, honourable, and Godlike—strong enough to become a Spartan mother, tender enough for a beautiful Ophelia; and Mary, his affianced, who was running over with the poetry of Nature, and devotional feeling. These were they who had sat for Lester's portrait of woman, others he knew not; and who shall wonder at his being almost shocked at the seemingly light manner in which Ella had spoken of a Miss Poinder falling in love with him?

Even, on the side of his personal appearance, he was free from vanity, and knew not the manful beauty of his form and features. It seemed impossible to him that there could be anything attractive about his looks; and, although not with discernment, it was with perfect honesty, when his fit of merriment had subsided, that he told his sister there was nothing to fear upon that score.

"I'm half afraid that my Fairy Queen is poking fun at her listening knight, who knows well enough that he is no Adonis. Do you know, Ella, that the last time I surveyed my face in a glass, I was rather astonished to find, not only that its colour had departed, but to perceive, also, that a certain disagreeable tallowy look, something of the "sere and yellow leaf" combined with a thoroughly unhealthy appearance, had usurped its place. It appeared to me more like the face of one likely to become the humble slave of Dr. Moule, than the conqueror of female hearts. And, by the way, although I know now that all I want to restore the old colour is a few days' run upon the hills—that reminds me I have to spend-to-morrow evening with the good Doctor—rest assured, Ella, even if there could be any, under other circumstances, there is no danger while my face looks so much like that of a churchyard deserter. But let us change the subject."

"No, George, I cannot consent to change it while you entertain such erroneous ideas about our sex. It concerns your future peace of mind to have the subject fairly sifted. I believe that there is more unhappiness caused by good men who are ignorant, than by evil ones who are designing. The former are sure to win affection through their kindness and general suavity of manner when not attempting it, or even dreaming such a capture to be possible; while the latter more frequently overshoot the mark, and put intended victims upon their guard."

"Then for the sake of your sex, ours had better be wickedly-designing than honourably good."

"Don't be provoking, George. You know I don't mean that. What I mean is this, that the good man who does not intend it, is far more likely to give birth to hopeless affection, than is the evil one who desires it. Unless the good man is upon his guard, he is likely to say and do such things as are sure to kindle the fires of love in a generous woman's heart; and you are just the sort of person to inflict this damage. And, speaking of good looks, while I confess that yours have not improved during the past eighteen months, since the death of dear mother, yet there is far more danger in your pale anxious face, wearing as it does a robe of sorrow and of care, than there would be if it were ruddy or brown with health. It is the pale-faced clergyman who attracts the attention and wins the sympathies of the unmarried members of his congregation. For him there is no end of tender admonitory epistles, filled with loving advice to take care of his health, to preserve himself for the glorious future awaiting him, and so forth; all of which are penned by the admiring and thoroughly good-hearted girls who sit to listen to his sermons."

"And is it solely the pale face, Ella, which wins him so much favour?"

"Not solely; but as I wished to say, it is altogether a mistake to suppose that personal beauty, the mere mould of a face, and what is commonly called good looks, can win the heart of a woman. Such beauty pleases her eye, and gratifies that love of all beautiful forms which she possesses; it may even go so far as to call forth a few sighs and tears, and excite a degree of sentimental pondering—a fact which induces many of them to imagine the flutter and excitement of their hearts is a token of new born love, but it is nothing of the sort."

"Still, my Fairy Queen—and now that you have launched upon the theme, I will resign myself to receiving all the lesson—you will acknowledge that the flutter and excitement, as you call it, may ripen into love; that the eye being pleased will hardly fail to bribe the heart, and so secure the conquest?"

"I make no confessions which are not warranted by the facts. The truth is, that, comparatively speaking, beauty has nothing to do with winning the heart, not even in the case of gentlemen, who, however, are far more powerfully and deeply influenced by it than we are. Personal beauty is nothing more than the elegantly spread table *sans* the eatables; and if the latter be not supplied, the former will not meet our wants. I remember reading of a young captain who saw a beautiful female form and face, which so ravished his senses that, as closely as her own shadow, he followed the owner about for days. He sought no introduction, but gave himself up to this strange mode of worship, until his friends believed his days would end in a lunatic asylum. Happily for him his release soon came. One hot day, after he had followed her about in her shopping excursion, watching her as it she had been an angel, just when the fair one was stepping into her carriage, she turned to her page and shrieked out, 'I'll wring your neck, you young wretch, if you don't take more care of Fido.' The said Fido being a strangely ugly French poodle, which had been inconvenienced by the passengers. From that moment the charm was dissolved, and the captain became perfectly convalescent. The voice was hideously unmusical, but it cured him. To secure a conquest over his heart something more was needed than personal beauty; and it is just the same with woman."

"I remember a circumstance of that kind, Ella, happening to myself. It

was at a dinner party, where I sat opposite to a lady whose face was the most perfect model of beauty; indeed, it was the loveliest I ever saw. For a time I could neither eat nor speak, and did nothing but look at her. But, as in the case of the captain, I was disenchanted the moment she spoke; for among discordant voices hers was unmatched; it makes me shudder even now to remember its tones."

"Do us the justice to believe that the majority of our sex are influenced in the same way. In truth, to win the heart of a woman—and, of course, I mean one who has not had her heart and all her true feelings destroyed, according to the modern boarding-school methods—a man must have something remarkable in his air, or in the tones of his voice; something in the all-embracing width of his charity, or the vastness of his attainments; something in his success as a poet, orator, or statesman; something in the state of his health, or in the greatness of his sorrows. Many a widower has won the love of woman through the intensity of his grief for her whom he had lost—the tender feeling began in sympathy, and ended in all-absorbing love. In all cases there must be, if not something to interest them, at least something which will admit of being magnified by the imagination until it becomes really interesting. I know a young lady who became passionately attached to a gentleman who had a club-foot. She was pained by the idle jests to which he was exposed; she felt how keenly he suffered when the light-hearted and thoughtless rudely ventured to descant upon that topic, or to profess pity for his infirmity; and finally she ended by becoming his passionate admirer. But if a man has been brave enough to perform some heroic deed which may be remembered with pride, it will be no bar to his success, even if he should be positively ugly; for in that deed, if, Othello-wise, he will but recount it to her, he has the means of winning the best hearted of our sex."

"Well done, my Fairy Queen. And so you imagine that, if I were to spend much time at Rose Hall with the Miss Poinders, I should so far interest them as to win their love?"

"Yes, certainly you would."

"But, apart from the pale face, which I fully believe will soon be ruddy again, with all due gravity I ask, what is it in me that would interest them?"

"Your earnestness and tenderness. If you speak upon any subject it is with your heart, and not merely with your tongue, you deliver your sentiments. There is nothing cold and formal about you, but always, when speaking of nature or mankind, you do so with soul and feeling. Then, again, there is a peculiar, almost feminine, tenderness in your character. It would be impossible that you should read a touching story without being greatly affected. Even last evening, while you were reading that story of the ruined cottage, in *The Excursion*, you were powerfully affected, and had the trick of grief. This leads you, when the subject of conversation is in any degree painful, as affecting the happiness or lives of others, to speak in an undertone of emotion; and there is something almost fatal to the peace of a thoroughly good-hearted, generous, and disengaged woman, who is daily brought into contact with a man who allows himself to indulge in that habit."

"Now you mention it, I remember that it is so; but I am not conscious of it at the time I am speaking."

"No, you are not, and simply because, through allowing your feelings to have the mastery, they give the tone and colour to your speeches; but there is danger in it, and, for the sake of the innocent and confiding, who may be

deceived, you must check the practice, so as to avoid inflicting the pain which, in your heart, you would not approve."

"There may be a great deal of sound philosophy in what you say, Ella; and by-and-bye I shall think the matter quietly over, trying to separate the exact measure of truth from that which I must attribute to your sisterly exaggeration and care for my happiness. But how and where did you learn all this? Who was your Mentor? Have you had some painful experience in this matter? Ah, Ella, you blush! Tell me, my dear good sister," and here his voice became tremulous with anxiety, "have you learnt all this through suffering?"

"No, George, I am heart-whole and perfectly secure; I have had no personally painful experience. As far as my simple knowledge extends, it has been gained partly from observation, partly from reading good books, and partly from the occasional remarks of Dr. Moule. He does not do it now, but years ago he used to talk to me in a most confidential strain, and somehow he managed to make me see for myself, and meditate upon what I saw; I believe he did me good, for I find myself free from many of the troubles which afflict others, and probably less likely to rush into a profitless marriage. I have much, very much, for which to thank our good old friend."

"Whoever wins you, Ella, will win a prize. All I am astonished at is, that you still remain to be won."

"As yet, I have never seen the man to whom my heart would answer, Yes! And when I do, he will be—"

"Faultless, and the very paragon of men."

"No, not faultless, for then he would never advance nearer to perfection. He would be like polished marble, always the same. I would rather have the man who has many faults, but who has strength enough to admit and correct them; for with him life would be a beautiful reality, and a progression. Perhaps, George, it may be wrong in me, but I have a strange feeling against being perfect. I want something to set before myself, something to achieve; and I am happier while struggling up, than when the object of my desires has been gained."

"At least, Ella, you have had abundant experience in that 'striving to attain'; for, when we were children, whatever your mind was set upon was invariably accomplished: I never knew you to be without some purpose, and cannot remember your failing; there was always something to be learnt in a week, or some piece of work to be finished in a given number of days; I used to wonder, and feel annoyed, that you could not be tempted to leave it undone, but somehow your plodding example excited and assisted me, as your words now do. But I must be up and doing. Think of this, Ella, I have real sermons to prepare; for I, that sit and learn so much from you, am to stand up as a teacher! And somehow I cannot get on with repeating the discourses I have given before. It seems, while I am reading them, to be merely playing a part, and yet the best men do it. Then, what with saying good-bye to the old haunts, my fine old beech-tree, and the dells in the common, there will hardly be a minute to spare."

Ella gazed after her brother, as he quitted the room, with something more than the pride of a sister. And, if the truth be told, her only wish at that moment was, instead of meeting the man unto whom her heart could answer, Yes, that Fate would kindly permit her to spend the years of life in companionship with the young rector of Crosswood. She was not romantic, and yet that was her one desire.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REFORMATION.—XXV.

CHARACTER AND DEATH OF WYCLIFFE.

WE have seen Wycliffe as the Reformer, let us look at him as the parish priest. In the course of this work we have had frequent occasion to speak of the degradation of Christianity into Priestcraft at the hands of the Church, and to condemn (as every right-thinking man must) that Priestly Caste who led Europe into the slough of superstition and degradation for their own vile purposes. It is, therefore, the more pleasing to be able to recognize in many of the poor parish priests men of the true Christian spirit. It is to the existence of such men in the old Church, that we have to attribute the love and veneration with which she was regarded by the poor and ignorant people for so many centuries, indeed, still is, even to this day, in the rural districts of Catholic countries. Charity and self-sacrifice, kindly sympathy with human woe, and unflinching endeavours to alleviate the sufferings around them, have ever, indeed, been found in larger measure among the Catholic parish priests, than among the Protestant ministry, who seem to think their whole duty is to preach "sound doctrine," and attend alone to the "*spiritual* interests of their "flocks." But we never can look upon these men with unmixed approbation, they are priests after all, and, like every Priesthood—Protestant, Catholic, or other than either—work not to raise the people out of their degradation, but to make them contented in it. Let us, however, be just to their virtue so far as it goes; and this Wycliffe had in all its fullness, but he had something more—he sought to make his people think, and to free them from the superstitions which had so close hold of them.

Wycliffe held the Rectory of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, for many years previous to and up to the time of his death, and there it was that he first promulgated the truths which the Church of Rome does, and the Church of England should, call heresy; for he was the enemy of Priestcraft in all its forms. In Chaucer's fine description of the "Parson," we have a picture of what Wycliffe was at Lutterworth—the man of real practical piety. It is interesting to know that it is credibly believed the poet had Wycliffe in his mind when writing it.

Some passages we quote:

"Benign he was, and wondrous diligent,
And in adversity full patient:
And such he was yproved often sithes
Full loth were him to cursen for his tithes:
But rather would he given, out of doubt,
Unto his poore parishioners about
Of his offring, and eke of his substance
He could in little thing have suffisance. . . .
He was a shepherd, and no mercenary,
And though he holy were and virtuous
He was to sinful men not dispiteous. . . .
To drawn folk to heaven with fairness
By good ensample were his business. . . .
A better priest I trow that nowhere none is,
He waited after no pomp, ne reverence,
Ne maked him no spiced conscience
But Christe's lore, and his Apostles' twelve,
He taught, *but first he followed it himselfe.*"

In this last touch we have one of the many proofs, existent in his writings, of the wonderful power of painting character in a few words

possessed by Chaucer ; in it we at once see how far the original of this picture differed from priests in general.

Between Wycliffe's duties at Lutterworth, and his University lectures, his time was fully occupied. Ever at work, he asked not, and cared but little, what his enemies were preparing against him. It was in the year 1379, that in the midst of his work, he was struck down by sickness so severe that it was thought to be a fatal sickness. In his weakness a body of Mendicant Monks visited him, believing him to be at the point of death ; their visit was, ostensibly, to exhort him to repentance, but their manner expressed the exultation they felt that their enemy was in the grasp of death. In the midst of their exhortations to him, lying there in the last stage of weakness, a sudden life seemed to inspire him ; gradually raising himself up, his countenance glowing with indignation, to the consternation of the monks, thus he spoke :—" I shall not die, but live—to declare the glory of God and the evil deeds of the " Friars ! " From that moment he quickly recovered strength, and the superstition of the time thought a miracle had been wrought. The Friars departed in confusion. We have already seen how he redeemed his pledge, through those years of incessant labour for the truth he had at heart, glanced at in our last week's paper. Much more, of course, could be told were we writing the biography of Wycliffe ; but our aim here is only to sketch his career, and to form an estimate of the part he took in the gradual evolution of the great historic drama known as the Reformation. The results of his work will hereafter more fully appear ; and it is rather in the results, than in the actual achievements, of the lives of many of the greatest men of the past, that we learn the true value of what they did.

Earnestly and honestly this man lived, and wrote, and spoke, and worked ; whatsoever he had to do he did it with his might, and as with all who have done, or shall do likewise, his memory can never be lost, and the influence of his life and work was felt through the ages which came after him. But a time came when he, too, must depart. We look across the gulf of five centuries into the Church of Lutterworth, on the morning of Sunday, the 31st of December, 1384. We listen to the glorious chaunts which form a portion of the service, and note, too, that a large portion from the Bible is read in English, and that there is no raising of the consecrated host. The service over, we see entering at the front door the aged Pastor, Wycliffe. With tottering steps and slow, he passes up the aisle, and many a tear is dropped as the people note how much he has altered since he last met them. With simple earnestness he had wished them, and they him, a " Merry Christmas and a happy New Year ; " and merry it has been for many of them, but since then paralysis has laid a heavy hand upon their aged friend. He has been earnestly advised not to go to preach this morning, but yes ! yes ! he will even go and say what he has to say. As he ascends the pulpit stairs, many a silent heartfelt prayer is offered up for him ; for the people love him. And now he speaks, his trembling tones becoming stronger and stronger as enthusiasm is kindled by his subject, as he tells his people that once more they are entering on a new year, and that once more new chances are offered to them to work out their own salvation, as he begs them not to believe that oblations and gifts are of any use, but to remember that a righteous life is what God demands. At length his sermon closes, and he spreads out his hands to bless the congregation ; they wait to hear the well-known sounds. See ! see ! he has sunk back ;—he will never speak benediction more. His lips are closed for ever :—he is dead !

So, as quaint old Fuller says: "The hare so often hunted, with so many packs of dogs, expired at last quietly sitting on his form." They buried him in Lutterworth Churchyard; and for 30 years his bones lay there undisturbed. And then—O impotent malice!—the Council of Constance ordered his body to be exhumed and burnt as that of a heretic. The order was obeyed, for persecution was rife in England then. The ashes were cast into the little river Swift, which runs through Lutterworth; and "the brook," says Fuller, "did convey his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow Seas, they into the main Ocean. And thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrines, which now are dispersed all the world over." Yes! they might burn his body, as, had he been alive, they would have burnt him, but they could not destroy the truth he spoke, which was destined to work out many and great results, and the force of which even yet is not exhausted, nay, as with all truth, whenever, wherever, and by whomever spoken, can never be.

Fifteen years after the death of Wycliffe, Richard II. was deposed and Henry IV. reigned in his stead. The utmost severity of persecution, short of death, had characterised the proceedings of the Church against the followers of Wycliffe during those fifteen years, but beyond imprisonment and fines, Richard had never allowed them to go. Henry, however, owed the Church a debt of gratitude, and, moreover, feared her power, as being a Usurper (or, to say the least, capable of being represented such), the Church might, by throwing in the weight of her authority on the side of the malcontents, hurl him from the throne he had gained. This made him the humble servant of the Church. Immediately on his accession, he proclaimed himself protector of the Church, and ere he had reigned two years, the infamous statute *de Heretico comburendo* was passed, by which, for the first time in the history of England, persecution was legalised. The common law of England had stood in the way hitherto. This act was passed for "the protection of the Church," and the suppression of the Lollards. The very same year the first victim fell a sacrifice, and it was not long before burning for Lollardy became common; and, but that the English people never looked kindly on this work, would have been much more common. But not all the burning and persecution was of any avail; the more they burnt and punished, the more there were to burn and punish.

The Lollards in England must be looked upon as the immediate progenitors of the Puritans of a later date, to whom, and whom only, can we look for the true religious Reform of the 16th and 17th centuries—those grand old iron men who would have nought to do with the miserable compromises which a Henry VIII. and an Archbishop Cranmer called a Reformation. We shall look at these Puritans at a later date, and see that they were the real creators of Religious Freedom (so far as it is existent) amongst us, thereby approving themselves as the real inheritors of the spirit of Wycliffe. But a long and a fiery ordeal had the spirit of religious earnestness and freedom to go through ere finally it conquered. That, however, it would conquer, Priestcraft itself, if not judicially blinded by its hate of true religion, might have seen; for during all those years of Lollard persecution and martyrdom, the heart of England was being irretrievably alienated from the Church, and the system which, in the name of religion, perpetrated such deeds. Come what might, Popery and Priestcraft could never again reign absolute in England; although Protestants no less than Catholics sought to make them so.

None of the leaders of the Reformation were so thorough in their attacks

upon the strongholds of Priestcraft as Wycliffe. We have already said, that, in spite of attempts to prove the contrary, it is quite certain Wycliffe was no Episcopalian, as he was opposed to a priestly caste. He would have destroyed, root and branch, the State Church. In him the Spirit of Religious Freedom found its full expression, so far as ecclesiastical polity is concerned; and even his doctrinal heresies arose out of his hatred to Priestcraft. Mr. Le Bas (his high Church biographer) has perceived this, and consequently cannot find it in his heart to express more than a qualified admiration of his work. He sums up the evils (as he calls them) which would have resulted if the Reformation of the Anglican Church had been conducted by Wycliffe. "Episcopal government," he says, "might then have been discarded—ecclesiastical endowments and foundations might have been, for the most part, sacrificed—the clergy consigned to a degrading dependence on their flocks. . . . Had Wiclif flourished," he continues, "in the sixteenth century, it can hardly be imagined that he would have been found under the banners of Cranmer and of Ridley. Their caution, their patience, their moderation, would scarcely have been intelligible to him, . . . and therefore it is, that every faithful son of the Church of England must rejoice, with trembling, that the work of her final deliverance was not consigned to him."* that is, must rejoice that Priestcraft was not entirely overthrown.

We shall have an opportunity hereafter of testing the real nature of the Reformation in England as it was actually carried out. Suffice it now to remark, that Wycliffe's reform remains yet to be accomplished. Priestcraft (shorn of its terrors, it is true, but still with much power of evil) yet exists among us; a State Church still stands to remind us, with its tithes and church-rates, that Religious Freedom, even of the merely outward kind, is a thing to be accomplished in the future, and not yet a fact amongst us. But let us not forget that there is a Religious Freedom, even beyond that marked out by Wycliffe, which must be consummated before our Spiritual Progress, as a people, is possible; and for this, as well as the full fruition of the other, Religious Reformers must work: we speak of freedom from those theological fetters which, now, alas! as much as in the past, bind in soul-slavery so large a majority amongst men; and wherein lies the strength of Priestcraft still. So must it be until men hail all truth as a Revelation from God, and do not start with the foregone conclusion that we know all God's Truth already, that it is contained within the lids of any Bible, or has ever yet been revealed in its entirety. To establish a Church without Creed, a Religion which shall satisfy the Reason, while it ignores not the intuitions of the soul of man; believing that God is a Living God, and yet speaketh, and that the more we study History, and recognise His Hand there, the more we question Nature, and comprehend His Work there, the nearer shall we arrive at a knowledge of His Being; to seek in our lives to obey His Laws and work out His Will, believing that so doing we may go, when Death calls us, to meet Him and the Great Ones who, working in the like spirit, have gone before us into His presence—these are our aims, these our earnest beliefs, and to aid in this work should be the object of every lover of real Religious Freedom. This is the proper work of To-day. And if in reviewing the careers of the Reformers of the Old Time, we bear this in mind, we shall find therein many a useful lesson.

JAS. L. GOODING.

* Life of Wiclif, pp. 365-6.

OUR NEW HALL, NEWMAN STREET, OXFORD STREET.

THE time has at length arrived when the Society of Independent Religious Reformers will be in a position to work out their proposed plans with greater chances of success. According to their programme the objects of the society are threefold :—

“To secure the association of such persons as are desirous of cultivating the Religious sentiment in a manner which shall be free from the evil spirit of creed, the intolerance of sectarianism, and the leaven of priestcraft, of such persons as respect the authority of Reason, and reverentially accept the decrees of Conscience :—

“To discover and methodise Truths connected with either the Laws of Nature, the Progress of Thought, or the Lives of Good Men of all ages and countries, so that they may be rendered of practical value as guides to a healthful, moral, and manly life :—

“To assist, as in the performance of a religious duty, in the regeneration of Society, by co-operating with every organized body whose aim is to abolish superstition, ignorance, drunkenness, political injustice, or any other of the numerous evils which now afflict society.

“The Society proposes to attain its objects by means of co-operating to promote the public delivery of Lectures bearing upon Science, History, and Religious Freethought; by means of Schools in which the young shall be educated to love God and goodness, to know the inestimable value of truth and freedom, and to fear nothing but vice, serfdom, and dishonour; by means of Classes for adults; and finally, by means of Publications in the form of journals, essays, and volumes.”

Up to the present time little towards accomplishing those objects has been done, besides securing the delivery of Lectures and the weekly publication of the Pathfinder, but having more scope we hope henceforth to do more and to achieve a wider success.

The Editor of this journal, acting for the Committee, has taken upon lease for 21 years, the fine premises in Newman Street, Oxford Street, long known as the Philharmonic Hall, and more recently used as a district church. The hall itself will seat, with great comfort to all, thirteen hundred persons, beside which there is a space which may, at small expense, be fitted up so as to extend the accommodation to sixteen hundred sittings. In connexion with the hall there are various rooms, easily made available for classes, and even for small meetings, so that while lectures are being delivered in the hall, or meetings are being held, the classes could go on as usual.

It is proposed that there shall be a regular Theistic religious service, conducted by P. W. Perfitt, every Sunday morning. In the evening lectures upon English History, Biography, Science, and kindred subjects, will be delivered, so that while upon the one hand the wants of man's religious nature will be met, on the other, there will be a recognition of the equally-important desire for general and practical knowledge, which is not usually supplied on Sunday evenings. Weekly lectures will also be delivered under the auspices of the Society, and the Hall will be available, and will be let, for other lectures and public meetings.

The Committee consider it to be a great advantage that these premises have been secured for their purposes, and now all that remains to be done is to fit the Hall up with seats, and to supply other requisites for the holding of meetings. The sum required for this purpose is three hundred pounds.

Before the lease could be obtained, it was necessary to pay down two hundred and fifty pounds; which sum was furnished by the Committee, assisted by a few other friends, who now look with confidence to the admirers of Religious Freethought to supply the funds still required in order to render the Hall immediately serviceable. There are many of our readers who can afford to subscribe towards the fund, and by doing so at once they will greatly facilitate the progress of the works. Others who are not able to give may still be in a position to lend money, for six or twelve months, in sums of five, ten, or twenty pounds. Whoever can and will do the latter, will not only be conferring a favour upon the Committee, but will also be greatly assisting the cause of Religious Progress. They are hereby invited to pay over whatever sum they may be disposed to lend, either to the Secretary, on any Sunday evening, or to P. W. Perfitt, 20, Hemingford Terrace, Barnsbury, from whom they will receive an acknowledgment of the debt.

We cannot doubt that, in an age like this, when it is the boast that Churches and Chapels are being far more rapidly subscribed for than at any former period, the opening of a Church for the expression of Religious Freethought will be hailed with satisfaction, and well supported by all who are desirous of promoting the progress of mankind. If the agents of intolerance can collect their thousands, surely the friends of liberty should be able to manage the units. We want only three hundred pounds, and must obtain that sum without invoking the aid of burning brimstone to frighten the cash out of men's pockets. Who, for the pure love of a good cause, will rally to our side? There is room for help, there is need for it, and if given, it will be for the diffusion of those religious and general ideas which have been promulgated in THE PATHFINDER.

Will our friends favour us with their subscriptions at an early date, so that the bills for various contracts entered into may be honourably met?

It is proposed to open the Hall in the month of July.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, PH. D.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

(Continued from page 384.)

THIS is the present doctrine of the Churches. The pastors say, Come ye to the house of God, and attend to the safety of your own souls; but do not go out to fight the battles of the world. God will look to all that in his own good time; it is not for us to meddle when we cannot mend. Some noble-souled priests there are who, like Kingsley, Maurice, McNaught, Wilson, and others, repudiate the miserable do-nothing creed, and teach that we should ever be doing and everywhere while wrong is in the ascendant, and evil is daily done. Neither would I confine my exception to men in the present times, or exclude all of the Hebrew world. When we come to the writings of the bards of Israel, the prophets, we shall hear as noble utterances as ever escaped the lips of men—utterances which neither inculcated selfishness, nor applauded cowardice. They taught that it is for man to work as well as wait, and from them we may draw the noblest assertions of principles, the reverse of those here laid down. They, too, could recognize the fact, that God saw all, but, with the other fact, that it is for us to bring in the good. There are passages in Isaiah and Jeremiah, as well also in the minor prophets, in which the doctrine is wisely insisted upon, that it is by the employment of human means the wrongs of life are to be blotted out. And, as Englishmen, we can solemnly endorse that teaching. There has been a deal of praying in this land, as much, perhaps, as in any of its size; but, until work has been done, the answer has not

reached those who asked it. There can be no longer a doubt about the fact, that it is he who loveth the more truly, and who worketh the most nobly, who is the best man at prayer. Men prayed to have the Pope shaken in his seat of authority; Exeter Hall has resounded with prayers of that stamp; but, somehow, the sending the French army into Italy has done more to effect that object than all the prayers. Still I have no doubt, so clever are men when dealing with these subjects, that the time is not far distant when it will be elaborately demonstrated, that it was in answer to the Exeter Hall prayers God raised up the French army to effect the object there prayed for; when, of course, it will be equally clearly shewn, that, although the men who went were sent of God, still, being wicked men, "used by" the Divine Power to work out his own mysterious purposes," they had evil aims of their own, and so of course are not deserving of our praise. But even that is better than the wretched doctrine of this Preacher, for if his theory were to prevail honesty and manhood, liberty and security, trust and truth, would soon be banished from the earth to perish without hope of redemption.

Then he teaches that men should not labour for riches, and his teaching is made the burthen of many sermons, which, however, with all their weakness, are generally much nobler than their foundation text. The Preacher says:—"There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof." Thus riches are an evil, and in other styles the same thought is repeated, but, unfortunately, in a low form, and the whole is placed upon a rotten foundation. For wherever the idea is brought forward, we have it forced upon us that the evil to be complained of is quite other than what it really is. In the passage just quoted, the evil is that the riches cannot be carried away by him who has acquired them. "He shall take nothing of his labour which he may carry away in his hand." If he could carry them beyond the grave, then there would no longer be any objection to their accumulation; but, as this wealth must be left to be enjoyed by some one who has not toiled for it, behold! it is evil. I can hardly conceive anything more grossly selfish than this, and were it reduced to practice as a principle, it would annihilate all good and progress. For if we may not work for riches because we cannot carry them away with us, why should we toil for anything else, when upon all the same bar is laid? This, indeed, is the result arrived at by the Preacher, who says we should not, in truth, trouble about anything; and so far he is logical enough, and very fairly carries out his reasoning to its ultimate result. We, however, deny that it is a fair ground against gaining riches. It is purely selfish, and all selfish reasonings are immoral. Still I do not say, therefore his cry against striving for riches is wrong. The reasonable objection to this struggle is that the man who makes riches his being's end and aim, is not only unjust unto himself, but to society also. Such a pursuit is impossible, unless there is more or less hardening of the heart and destruction of the finer chords of human sympathy. And hence I say to men, do not spend so much of life in the search after riches, because they cost too much, they involve too great sacrifices, and they cannot furnish any adequate compensation for the labour bestowed upon their acquirement.

Wisdom is also repudiated as worthless. We have many and great lamentations made about wisdom, how it is sought out, through serious difficulties, and then proves valueless to its possessors. In some of the passages it seems as though wisdom is really worth possessing, but when we come to the summing up, then, behold! like all else, it is vanity: "This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me. There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city: yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard."* So that wisdom is better than folly, is in itself a little more to be loved, and yet what good doth it unto men? That wise man was unheeded, and his words were not

* Eccles. ix, 13-16.

heard; therefore, his wisdom was all vanity! It is to be observed here, that this passage has led many critics to the conclusion that they who endeavour to induce mankind to gather wisdom are acting as their enemies, because, in obtaining it, they only obtain a new source of trouble. Teach them to obey the laws, to be content with their station, and that will do; such is the favourite cry. But surely it is not in this passage that its justification can be found. They who seek it here do not seem to have learned the great law of life, which shines out in self-sacrifice. They point to this poor man as one of the unrewarded wise—as one who did well for men but received nothing in return. Is it true, however, that he received no reward? Is there none but a pudding reward? Had he been paid in fine gold, had a collar been put about his neck, so that he should have gone forth among men as the third in the kingdom, then I presume all had been well, and he would have been hailed as the rewarded one, but because he received no gold these mere hucksters and petty traffickers in “wisdom” conclude that it were better to have no wisdom at all, and then men would not be disappointed. They overlook the fact that the man succeeded in saving the city, they omit to notice that he was a victor when all other men believed victory to be impossible, and are unmindful of the truth that to tread the streets of a city, bearing within your heart the knowledge that you have saved its streets, its hopes, its wives, its children, from ruin rudeness and slavery, is to possess a reward which transcends all that humanity can bestow. Of course, however, the man must have a heart, or he will be insensible to all this, and will be discontent if a money payment be not made. Such are they who dwell upon the “sadness” of this man’s lot. They preach and pray, and make money. The “House of God” is their market-place, where they cry aloud, and are not ashamed to say, that if you have wisdom, and can save a city, but do not obtain any reward from men in relation to it, you had better have no wisdom at all. And, in teaching thus, they are but reproducing the language of the Preacher, for that is the theory he proceeds upon. Had he been fortunate enough to have lived at a later date, and in England, instead of Palestine, I am inclined to believe we could have taught him a better lesson, and shown him men whose lives illustrate the noble truth, that to possess wisdom and to do good is its own exceeding great reward.

It is only natural that a preacher who had adopted such widely mistaken views of men and things, should fall into errors in relation to many other and equally important points. And what we philosophically expect is realised in the writing. The author is alarmed at everything at all broad and comprehensive, or what we now call universal undertakings, so he advises that the rule of moderation in speech and action should always be observed. He writes like an oracle in connection with “much wisdom,” and even “much righteousness,” and “much wickedness,” be sure not to go to extremes with either of these. “Be not righteous over much: neither make thyself over wise; why shouldst thou destroy thyself? Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why should thou die before thy time?”* Be moderate in all, in righteousness, and in wickedness! Curious passage that, and one which critical men should attend to, seeing that it nullifies the common teaching, that we should abstain from wickedness altogether. But the line, “Be not righteous over much,” is one of those lines to which the clergy are deeply attached, and the laity are ready enough to quote it. Some time ago, when in company with a great brewer, who was very warm in his advocacy of all truly pious plans for ameliorating the condition of the poor, and who made his religion a perfect bore, I inquired why, being so very “orthodoxly religious,” he continued the profession of a malster brewer, seeing that to carry it on he was compelled to employ men to work on Sunday—a day he had been saying should be kept religiously sacred. I could not understand the consistency of objecting to employ men in one capacity, such as attending to a museum, if it were right and religious to employ them in the other, as malsters. Now, when I say that he had no reasonable defence, I am judging his answer from my own point of view, and in that may be considered as somewhat prejudiced, because, as an abstainer, I repu-

* Eccles. vii. 16.

diate the assumption that these drinks are necessary, or even advantageous: but this was his answer, that it was a work of necessity, and, consequently, that he was perfectly justified. Still, as I urged, there are millions who never had anything of the kind, millions who never heard of anything of the kind, and hence it is only a necessity of our own creation, and not universal. It can be dispensed with, and the proof is daily before us, and, as I pressed upon him, himself could do without them. Then came the passage from Ecclesiastes about being righteous over much, and all the empty phraseology, which is so frequently poured into our ears when we insist upon the religious duty of aiding the educational and other movements of the day which aim at emancipating men from evil.

But then, as some of these men inquire, if we work in these ways will it not prove a great labour and vexation of the spirit without adequate results? The Preacher deliberately teaches inaction, and were we guided by his views of life and duty we should sit still and fold our inactive hands in peace, leaving the mad world to work and weave its own misery and blessedness. In another place he says: "Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this 'a man is envied of his neighbour. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit. 'The fool foldeth his hands together and eateth his own flesh. Better is an handful 'with quietness than both the hands full with travail and vexation of spirit.'"* Or, in plainer English, 'Men who find out what it is right to do and do it, are 'envied by their neighbours; this envy is a source of pain from which fools and 'inactive men are free—they pass through life without enduring any suffering from 'a cause of this nature, and therefore it is better to take their small handful with 'quietness than it is to win a larger measure, when accompanied with the envy of 'our neighbours.' However any man with a soul in him, with any religious feeling in him, can talk about a book or essay which contains such teaching being a religious God-inspired book, I am wholly at a loss to conceive. It is the worldly-wisdom of a selfish man. The idea of good for its own sake, of good because of its intrinsic value, he had never realised. When so-called practical business men use such language, we know exactly how to appreciate it, and we can answer them easily enough; but when such a philosophy is elevated to the rank of religion, we stand amazed, both at its own unsoundness, and the folly of its admirers. That it is largely believed in the present day, I do not doubt, for we find it largely acted upon, but it has received its death-blow. Men are growing daily into the perception of the truth, that the goodwill of our neighbours must not be purchased at the cost of neglecting our perceived duties. And above this they are rising to the height at which they clearly perceive the shallowness of the old theories of happiness. If I go on doing my work, and enjoying the goodwill of my neighbour, it is well and pleasant enough, for probably, through this, aid will be won over for the right; but if my neighbour should look scornfully upon what I do, and make mock at it, or sit down and gnaw his nails through envy, why should I trouble, or turn aside, or falter on my path? Is there no sunshine where his approving smile is unseen? Is there no gladness where his frown darkens? Then, indeed, my neighbour has become my God, and has power to render me happy or miserable at his pleasure. What a Divinity! Alas! for us, if such be our case.

(To be continued.)

* Eccles. iv. 4, 5.

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OUT OF THE CLOUD;

OR, AN ENGLISH RECTOR IN SEARCH OF A CREED.

A TALE; BY P. W. P.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DREAM AND THE REALITY OF LOVE.

GEORGE LESTER felt that the preceding conversation had furnished him with a new insight into his sister's character, and he truly promised to think over what she had been saying. That morning, sitting in his study, surrounded by a collection of recently purchased books of divinity, and not knowing which to open first, his thoughts reverted to her remarks, and, in fact, he could think of nothing else. Of course, although his gallantry was a little bit chafed, he confessed that, upon the whole, she was right. He had his own suspicions of the Poinders, but they were neither so harsh nor so definite as hers. Still, whether she were right or wrong, as he asked himself, what could their character or aims matter to him? These surely were of little consequence. So far, too, as his prospects were concerned, they were so fair that there could be no cause to fear the future. None! and yet he did fear it. There was a sadness hanging about him, a sort of preternatural melancholy, and he was particularly vexed that accident had cast impediments in the way to prevent his marriage with Mary. It had been arranged after he took orders, that immediately the living of Crosswood became vacant, the marriage should take place; but now that the looked-for event had occurred, other causes had arisen to postpone their union; much against his will, and yet with his consent, it had been deferred. The reason was a painful one. An aunt of Mary's, living in Devonshire, had recently sustained the loss of her husband and two daughters, who were drowned while out upon a pleasure excursion, near to the mouth of the beautiful Tavey. In her affliction, she had requested Mary to visit, and, indeed, to live with her, for at least a few months; of course, the request was responded to. The shock had been great, even for those who were strangers to the family; but to her who had been thus suddenly bereaved, it was so terrible that she had become a confirmed invalid, and both

in her conversations with Mary, and her letters to Lester, her daily prayer had been, "Leave me not alone." She might be weeks, or even months, before it would be possible to leave her, and both the lovers felt that, under such painful circumstances, their own feelings could not be allowed to operate selfishly. Thus as an unmarried rector he was bound to enter Crosswood, but his hope was, before long, to shelter beneath his own roof both a wife and a sister.

The love of Lester for his accomplished and beautiful cousin, was not of that kind or degree which admits of being demonstrated by means of outward show, or through the utterance of any series of sentences, however eloquently expressed; it was alike too full and deep for words; and all the ordinary tokens, employed by prosaic minds, were as valueless for its display, as the lifting an ounce weight would be for demonstrating the strength of a giant. The love he felt was hidden away—was treasured in the profounder depths of his nature, as something too holy to be lightly alluded to, and too secure to be shaken by the changes and chances of fortune. Like some simple unheeded forest flower, it had grown up unperceived, but had struck so deep a root, that its fibres had twined themselves in with all that was strong and noble in his nature. It had now become so much a part of himself, so distinctly a part of his own life, that he scarcely ever alluded to it, or stated its existence; feeling, in fact, that there was no more reason for speaking of it, than there was of telling that his own body was endowed with life. Mary, herself, had learnt what she knew of its extent and fulness rather through the power of spiritual and emotional intuition, than through his distinct confessions; she had read its character traced upon her own heart, and felt sure the counterpart was traced upon his; she had learned it, not through the length, the beauty, or the passionate fervour of his speeches, but rather through the fine eloquence of his silence, and the perceptible tremor of his voice when they two either met or parted. With one exception, presently to be described, and considered as intended to be read as those of a lover, his letters were decidedly original. Many young ladies would have scouted them as nothing more than friendly epistles—as being too far removed from the all-important topic; for they contained no romantic love passages similar in absurdity to those which are found in sentimental novels. Yet the manful earnestness of his devotion was more fully proven by the absence of all statements respecting its heat, dimensions, and durability, than it could have been by all the miserable abortions, ycleped "love letters," which figure in the productions of the Minerva press. Running through them, there was an undertone of respect and reverence, of tenderness and confidence, which said more for the purity and genuineness, for the permanence and depth of his attachment, than could have been conveyed in any more direct style of declaration.

It is, however, but an act of justice to Lester that the reader should be made acquainted with the fact of his not having been always thus uncommunicative upon this point. As children, they had grown up together, loving and being loved as brother and sister. So rarely had they been separated for more than a week, that, although, as they grew older, each had become aware of their being but cousins, until after the entrance of George upon his life as an Oxford Graduate, there had been no change in their conduct and treatment of each other. During their separation they had learnt the true state of their feelings toward each other. After long pondering upon it, Lester wrote to his cousin, but not in his usual style. Dashing away all

reserve, paying no attention to formalities, he told of the new consciousness which had arisen within him, of the love he cherished, and of the terrible fears which haunted him, lest, having so long been treated merely as a brother, he could not, or ought not to, hope for being received in the character of a lover. There was nothing either weak or affected in this composition, for, as with all he said and wrote, it came from his heart. It appeared strange to him that this letter remained unanswered. Up to that time Mary had written with great regularity, then she ceased. But not, as he imagined, because of anger, or through desiring to close the correspondence. She had spoken to Mrs. Lester upon the subject, and that lady was not only "pleased to find events were happening as she had desired," but of opinion also, that, as George was to return home within a month, the answer had better be reserved for his arrival.

But what was he to do, and think, and suffer during the interval? Had the mother no thought about the anxiety of her son? Upon that point, and that only, the feelings of woman rise superior to those of the mother. In the latter capacity she hastens to subdue pain and to banish trouble from the breast of her child; but when the trial is one of the affections, she is neither so hasty nor so desirous to remove the difficulty. Instinctively has she learnt that, as a little pain in the gathering adds a charm to the fruit, so the pains of the lover, when not doomed to terminate in hopeless despair, do but serve to increase in his estimation the value of the prize for which he is striving. Mrs. Lester acted wisely in advising Mary to wait.

When George reached home the fact that Mary was not upon the landing to meet him, as usual, had struck a chill through his frame. But although he missed, he could not inquire after her. For years he had never once returned to the house, not even from a short excursion, without finding Mary waiting to receive him, and, under the circumstances, her absence upon this occasion was felt most acutely. He fancied that all had been decided against his wishes; fancied—But why tell his wandering thoughts, when each reader knows more of what he imagined than could be described in a volume? Yet it was unnecessary pain. Unable, after receiving his letter, to receive him as of old, and feeling that before others she could not venture upon giving him his first greeting in a new character, she had retired to the little garden house to await him. The refreshments stood untasted upon the table, and all the mother's pressing was, powerless to induce him to eat. Not without feeling herself to be somewhat wronged, she intimated where the missing one was to be found. The first greeting was sufficient to chase away all doubt, and to render the two hearts happy. And yet the spoken words were few. He did but say—

"Mary do not receive me merely as a brother; I must be more than that, or for the sake of our mutual peace I must quit home for some distant land."

Those were the precise words she wished him to utter; and yet, when as some new draught of life she had drank them in, and although striving to do more, she could but repeat them.

"Yes, more than a brother, much more than a brother."

Good spirits are ever on the watch to supply content when two full hearts are thus blended. They ministered, as those two sat, in the calm evening, hand in hand, uttering no word, yet feeling and learning more of heart-love than the loftiest genius of the pen could trace upon paper, or the greatest musician express in his symphonies. When through excess of feeling

the tongue is paralyzed and can utter the least, the eye and hand take up the tender tale, to express the most tender and beautiful of all the emotions. Whole volumes are occasionally expressed in a single glance of the eye. Undoubtedly the power of ordinary speech is great; but what can be said of that sort of speech in which, while no words are uttered, distinct ideas and exalted thoughts are conveyed which sink deeper, and cannot be allowed to fade from the memory? In ancient days, one glance of Medusa sufficed to change her victim into stone; are there none in the living world who can shoot forth death from their eyes, or change the heart of flesh into adamant? Happily, there is power also in the eye to soften and subdue. Some there are which beam a new life, and reviving hope and faith in the hearts of those who are sinking down into ruin, they inspire with courage, while indicating the folly of abject submission; others have flashed forth a reproof and an admonition far more powerful than the most logical of sermons, to redeem the erring and to strengthen the weak. The eye is still an unknown quantity waiting its conqueror. At present we can only point out, and wonder at its power, but, bye-and-bye, the discoverer will arrive to lead us through the deeper mysteries of its mechanism, and to unfold the secret of its magical influence.

And the hand, too, doth it not speak? The gentle pressure which is felt throughout the frame, and felt right on through sixty years, doth it not tell more than can be entrusted to the tongue? If men would inspire others with confidence in their intentions, if they would express sympathy with them in their afflictions, or would indicate the intensity and unwavering nature of their friendship, they do more with the hand than with the tongue to make a lasting impression. And when young hearts are stirred to their inmost depths, by the joy of knowing their love to be faithfully returned, who shall wonder that through the hand they endeavour to convey a due intimation of the fulness of their content, and of the inestimable value of their happiness?

The physiology of such happiness remains yet to be explored. The fountains of the great deep were opened up, and as the long pent up stream of love overflowed its ordinary channels, it swept away all worldly thoughts and petty cares; wealth, and power, and fame, all were forgotten and swallowed up in the blessedness of that hour. Had the portals of Heaven been thrown open for their admission, they would not have moved from their seats to enter in; for to conceive a degree of blessedness beyond that which they then enjoyed was impossible. Multiply all the imagined joys of Paradise, a million times, and then concentrate the whole into a perfect essence of bliss, it would still be inferior to that pure content, to that indescribable joy which was flowing through the spirits of those happy yet speechless lovers. Within their souls a sense of concord reigned supreme, for each felt assured of possessing the unalterable love of the other; and as no sound of earth or air broke the stillness of evening, so they had no jarring thought, no inward doubt, no horrible fear, to mar their perfect harmony of confidence and trustful love.

Fortunately the garden was retired, so that none of those cool and practical persons were present whose sole business in life seems to be that of putting poison into every cup of joy which in their presence is raised to the lip by a fellow-mortal. Moving in an atmosphere of suspicion, they fail not to scatter doubts and fears abroad which strike at the root of all our simple joys. If ever they are thoroughly contented, it is when they have succeeded in rendering all around them miserable. Such persons are not to be per-



suaded into looking with satisfaction upon those whose silence is speech and a source of knowledge. They instantly and sneeringly ask, "Ah, and what of forty years to come? Must not all who love change and die?" If they are invited to a wedding, they carry a coffin in their thoughts, and even in the hottest day of summer, they shiver at the bitterness of winter's cold, to which, as by the law of antagonism, their minds have reverted. How fortunate that, for the one evening at least, this class was wholly excluded from the Lester domain.

Why should such repose, content, and blessedness, be destroyed? Why should that unutterable satisfaction be made the butt of fortune? Why does even Nature herself set forces in motion to effect the destruction of such a state of feeling? For it is not alone from the deeds and passions, the folly and the injustice of man, that the blow comes which shivers the peace which at such hours blossoms into beauty in the soul. Love and imagination are the builders, but the necessities of our mortal life stretch forth their ruthless hands to destroy the fairy-like formations. It seems as if Nature did but hold up the Ideal in order to torture us by the sense of our loss when she has shattered the picture; and yet, may it not be, that by showing the possible she is but endeavouring to woo us into labouring after the transformation of our dreams into facts, and the conversion of our earth into the heaven of our imagination?

Several weeks passed away after that tacit confession, without either of them making, or desiring to make, any allusion to the one subject which absorbed their hours of quiet thought. They knew each other's hearts, and wished for no other knowledge; they felt an inward security, and were content to enjoy the passing hour, neither thinking nor speaking of the future. But upon one occasion, like happy children, they strolled away beyond Hill, and far along the Millbrook road, to that point where sight-seers pause to watch the rising tide spread over the shallows. Here they sat down and talked; talked of the caverns, corals, and other mysteries of the sea; talked of the blue vault above, and its profound depths, whose inhabitants are giant worlds, which dwell in peace, though not without sharing the universal sympathy which shows itself in attraction and repulsion; talked of beauty in all its manifold forms, and how wondrously it exerts its power upon the human spirit; nor did they omit to speak of life and sleep, with its 'twin-brother death.' The golden hours flew rapidly by; but they heeded them not; for just then, like beings of another sphere, they sat upon the hill apart, and talked of all things mighty and beautiful, finding their all of life in each other's words, and seemed to have nought to do with time. Evening at length closed in with unusual splendour; and then, in the distance, shone the warning lights which mariners hang upon the masts; the calm waters were spread out like a floor of crystal, which here and there dimpled into life, or shone resplendent with phosphorescent fire; while over all, the star-studded heavens, like a mantle endowed with life, fell gracefully down to adorn and curtain the half-slumbering world. Both George and Mary loved, and with no mere idle passion, the calm blessedness of evening; as a star-gazer, she had enjoyed it more frequently than he had done; yet never, until that night, had either truly felt the whole of its mystical and soul-entrancing power. For the first time they were privileged to feel the omnipotence of that Spirit which shines through the forms of Nature into the soul of man, to emancipate, to etherealise, and to ennoble.

There are granted unto all of us a few magical moments in life, wherein

it is our lot to feel that man, the mortal, while still treading upon the material, is capable of casting off his earthly garniture, so as to become one of those who see all things with the immortal spiritual eye. It is then that the emancipated can give expression to emotions, which, during many preceding years, had vainly striven for utterance, and can speak or write those words of psalm and song, which ever after are treasured as among the priceless properties of humanity. It was one of those moments which had now found Lester with the pearl of his life hanging upon his arm, looking with joy, awe, and wonder, into the mingled sea of life and light, festooned off by clouds and darkness which hung or rolled around them. It was then that his tongue was loosed, and he was enabled to pour forth those holier intimations of his love, which seemed to be delivered more in the language of heaven than of earth, and which once heard were never to be forgotten, but could not be repeated. They were full of life, energy, strength, and holiness, all uttered in music, but unhappily their full value can only be known in the great Hereafter.

For now as through a glass we do but dimly see,
And, 'mid the uproar, can but partly hear:
Once there, our spirit eyes, and ears, will open be,
And man become the true Immortal Seer.

What those words were we dare not tell. Enough for us that we shall lift up the veil to show their unlooked-for fruit. The words themselves, if indeed repeatable, must remain unrepeatable. The still toiling man must not be stripped of that which gives him power to labour on to his life's end, still to bear and still to conquer. He may be all that the ethics of heroism demand, yet that is no reason for stripping him of that single source of power. And what treasure of a true man or woman can be greater than is that which is composed of the first words of love breathed into their ears by one whose voice was as that of a spirit from heaven, and whose speech was as the most sacred psalm? In this God's world, are thousands who even to-day have nothing left save that single treasure; men, and women too, who are doing battle in life for what is noble and pure; who live not for themselves but for their race, who are misrepresented, misunderstood, despised, or even accused and down-trodden, and who have only that blessed memory left them wherewith to make life bearable. From the hot blasts of calumny, from the bitterness of injustice, and the oppression of wrong, they can retreat within themselves to enjoy the summer and bird music of their own souls; weary, and almost crushed by despair, they fall back upon this never-ceasing fountain of joy to refresh themselves for the ever-recurring battle of life. They recall the first words of love with the memory of the heaven which then hung about them, and as by the power of some mighty cordial they are again made whole. How, then, can we repeat and make common property of such magical and holy words? The true soul would as soon agree to hold a drunken carnival upon his mother's grave as to publish abroad the early whispered words of love.

Enough to know that they were powerful to convince, and so thoroughly earnest and honest, so evidently from the heart, that if love shafts were being prepared at Rose Hall, they would necessarily fall quite powerless upon the already occupied heart of George Lester.

THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF SAKYA (BUDDHA).

§ 12—THE OVERTHROW OF INDIAN BUDDHISM.

AFTER Asetas, the patron of Buddhism, died, others ascended the throne who had neither his wisdom nor breadth of policy—men who were incapable of comprehending the value of those doctrines Sakya had given. Buddhism was tolerant—let men say what they will of its weakness or partial absurdity, they cannot charge it with persecution, or with having lit up the fires of martyrdom. There was no desire shown by its disciples to do other than by persuasion to make converts. They seem to have acted upon the principle, that unless a man joined through love he could never be esteemed a good believer. And this is true of them at the present time. The reader who examines Huc and Gabet's travels in Tartary, Tibet, and Ohina, cannot avoid being astonished at the largeness of their toleration. Their Lamaseries were always open to the Western Missionaries, and the priests were ready to give any explanation of their views: it mattered not if the listeners assented or not, still was kindness shown, and all thought of persecution for religion's sake seemed far from them. They would listen with perfect friendliness to all the missionaries had to say; and although not accepting the doctrines, still there was kindness in their liberal observation,—“Ah, you of the West “believe one way, we believe another, still all mankind are brothers.” For months these missionaries remained in the Lamaseries, but were ever free to pray as they pleased, without a single sneering or intolerant observation—they were never pressed to listen to the priests of the place, nor were they expected to attend any of the ceremonial processions or forms of worship; neither were they charged for what they had, or in any way rendered poorer through their residence. It may be mentioned, too, that on one occasion a hare was brought them as a present by a man who said that “the priests did “not eat any wild animals; but if the Western brothers ate them, he would “bring one every day.” They agreed to accept it, and just afterwards a Lama priest entered the apartment. Of course he was horrified at the sight, and pained by the fact that the apartment was rendered impure through this dead hare; but when told by Huc that there was no law in his Sacred Book prohibiting such food, the Lama said no more, nor did any priest interfere, although afterwards game was regularly brought in. But this is only a fair specimen of the full tolerance which, from the earliest days, has marked the Buddhists.

Toleration was not the mark of its enemies. The Brahmins were roused to the highest degree of anger as the new creed spread through the land. They had not troubled themselves about opposing it in its earlier days, for they were indolent, well supplied, and careless about all else. But when the system spread, the Brahmin income declined—people no longer came to the temples, or joined in the processions, or paid for Brahminic aid in house-building and marriages; and we can easily understand how the attack upon the exchequer roused them from their slumber. They now discovered that “Buddhism was only Atheism,” consequently that all the Buddhists were sinful Atheists, and that Brahm would be advantaged if Buddhism were blotted out. This is the common argument of persecutors; they first blast the fair fame, and then strike at the life and property of their victims. It was represented that they drank the blood of children in their private assemblies; and whenever any evil happened in a district, it was immediately laid by the Brahmins to the charge of the Buddhists. So on one side there was unprincipled lying,

and on the other generous tenderness. The Buddhist was for using mild means, never resorting to harsh measures; while the other was ready to use any means. And it is absurd to suppose that mildness will gain the victory. It is all very well to use kind words when dealing with a nature likely to be impressed by them; but nobody would dream of caging lions with silken threads, and it is equally absurd to think of kindness gaining a victory over unprincipled rudeness and bigotry. And the Brahmins were stirred to action by the hope of gain, both in wealth and position. Could they only conquer Buddhism, then, indeed, all would be well, and they would have their place again. They did conquer, for, by union with the military caste, they gained power to burn the Buddhist temples and massacre the priests. True, indeed, it was a work of time, but fire and sword were not allowed to rest until it was accomplished. In many places the ruins of Buddhist temples have been dug up; and from the appearances presented, we know that priest and temple had been consumed in one great blaze; and in other places, as well as through the fragments of history, we know that the Brahmins never ceased in their labour until the victory was gained, and themselves were left masters of the field.

So this faith was driven out of India, even as Christianity was driven out of the East, and at the present time both of those religions are professed by people who live far from the scene of their birth. Buddhism has no more hold in India than Christianity has in Palestine. There are a few of the faith, but nowhere any large congregations. But in China it took root and flourished. Some of the Emperors adopted it, their successors, however, did not continue to render aid; for, in truth, the doctrines were too widely at variance with the principles of state upon which that empire is ruled. Hence it is that Buddhism in China is merely a tolerated religion, and its priests are compelled to submit themselves to the orders of the Emperor. Still it is believed that the number of real Chinese Buddhists do not fall short of 50 millions. Then in Siam the Buddhistic is the ruling religion, in Tartary and Tibet it rules under the name of Lamaism, and about this we may offer some word of explanation. They have connected with several Lamaseries a living Buddha, and believe that when one dies he immediately returns to earth again to resume once more his Buddha rule. But in this they do not teach that Sakya is incarnate again; they do not even mean that the being they have is a real Buddha, but a Buddhiswatha, or one who may become Buddha. Still it is their belief that the Buddha they have is somewhat holier than ordinary men; they believe that the Sakya power, in a much reduced measure, has descended to him, and will continue to descend until the next real Buddha appears. So that, stripping this idea of all the inane notions which our prejudices have clustered round it, we have left much the same as the Catholics believe of the Pope; he is not Jesus, but possesses some of the Divine Power. And the same is true of our English Church. What is that ceremony of consecration—laying on of hands, and endowing a man with the Holy Ghost? It is simply the same idea in another form, and surely, if, with all our light, this still prevails amongst us, it is rather too much to expect that from other less favoured lands it should be blotted out. Yet, in truth, Buddhism, with many weaknesses of this character, is still strong, and has a truth in its heart, and when that truth has been generally adopted, the mere husk and form may and will speedily perish.

But we must not close these articles without some comments upon the great teaching conveyed by this great Brahminic victory. We could say

much upon the strange parallel between the leading facts related of Buddha and Jesus, but abstain for the present, seeing that better opportunities will occur; and, moreover, this Brahmin victory is so thoroughly practical in its teaching. Buddhism was a step in advance; but, after taking it, the nation recoiled, and has never since moved an inch. As Sakya taught he made men, and sowed the seeds of an active and benevolent citizen life. Roads were made, cities were built, and the people were roused to full activity. They were equals, and uncursed by the badge of natural, or God-ordained inferiority. The remains, magnificent remains, of fine Buddhist buildings which are scattered over the whole of India, attest the industry, progress, and development of the people—there was a new idea, new hope, and new activity, and hence all went well, so that in a few ages India would have become great as a nation, and capable of developing in a condition of freedom the whole of its magnificent resources. But, alas! bigotry and caste prevailed, so that the tide of progress was rolled back, and men were made to walk in fetters, where, under other circumstances, they had moved in freedom. Then the priestly caste joined with the military, Church and King in unholy union, to steal away the birthright of the people. And they succeeded! Yes! succeeded in reducing the people to such a condition of fear that all went so that both Brahmin and military were safe. But in reducing the people they forgot that foreign enemies existed who might feel inclined to fight for the sovereignty. Mahometans poured into the land when the impoverished people were useless; and the cup of slavery presented by priests and rulers to the lips of the many was now in turn presented to their own. Vain now was their cry to that people they had reduced, for why or how should they fight when nothing had been left them to fight for? It was well so, for when rulers forget that it is for the people they should act, and not against them, there should arise some power who will mete out the same full measure to themselves and compel them to drink to the dregs the cup of misery and abject submission which they have so ruthlessly forced upon others.

P. W. P.

NOTICE.

PROGRESS IN NEWMAN STREET.

WE have much pleasure in informing our readers, that such progress is making in the fitting up and otherwise preparing the new place in Newman Street, as to render it certain that the opening will not be deferred beyond Sunday, July 21st, of which due notice will be given in our next. Of course much will depend upon the readiness with which our friends come forward to subscribe, or to advance by way of loan, those sums still needed, in order to complete the original design. The hope we are animated with is this, that a noble building, capable of affording accommodation to a large congregation of Theists, shall be opened in such a manner as will enable us to speak without shame of the accommodation which the Freethinkers can provide, in order to receive the young inquirers. They who will help us now will be putting their shoulder to the wheel just at the right time; and in after years we believe it will be a source of pleasure to them to remember how they assisted in the hour of beginning and difficulty.

SOUTH PLACE CHAPEL, SUNDAY EVENING LECTURES.

BY P. W. PERFITT, P.H. D.

THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES.

(Concluded from page 400.)

BUT has it come to this, that in life we do right things merely in order thereby to win our neighbour's good will? Is this the morality of the wisest man? Away with such soul-crushing doctrines! I will endeavour to do the right thing, and say the true word, because these should be done and said, and shall not trouble to inquire whether my neighbour be pleased or otherwise. Are we to be eternally asking for the good opinions of men, as if what they think is to make or break us? Are we ever to be carrying the fear of the world with us, humbly asking what Mrs. Grundy will say, and making, by such means, shipwreck of our own better life, and all this in obedience to the folly of those who sit in slavery around us? Talk not of the enchantment of the past as the great marvel, as the wonder of all time; but rather look at the marvellous enchantment of our own age, which infinitely surpasses all that fairy-tale or weird story relates of the past. The enchanted ones were waded into sleep by means of magic wands, and then, behold, wonders rich and rare rose up before them to chain their hearts, to gratify their senses, and to cause a pause in their breathing; but after all had passed, they awoke, and found it was but a dream. The enchantment of our age, however, is no dream, but a sad and stern reality. See how they sit there all in a row, men and women, all in a row, enchanted by Mrs. Grundy—all bound so firmly that they dare not venture upon saying they have souls of their own, dare not utter freely forth their own most solemn convictions, and are alarmed lest their neighbours should believe them to be Democrats or Freethinkers, Theists or Republicans! True it is that they have arrived at the conclusion in their own minds that God did not harden the heart of Pharaoh so that he should not let the people go, and prepare the dread punishments which were to afflict the Egyptians because of the sin God is said to have caused, but although this has arisen as a conviction in their own minds, they would not breathe it forth, "not for the world;" they have looked a little into our government systems, into our social systems, and have seen much rottenness and wrong, but will not speak lest they lose the smile of the priest, or the custom of the aristocrat. Oh, yes! they are enchanted, as we may plainly see, and they are all submissive to the wand of fashion or custom, and to the opinions of society. Not as men and women do they sit, but only as mere dolls, who are to be moved by the wires which are in the hands of mere dolls like themselves. They sit so, in order that they may go through life with ease, enjoying "the blessing of being well thought of by society." They "take their handful "in quietness," and we are asked to imitate them, asked to support the system they have strengthened and adorned. They say unto us, "Oh, sit my brother, and "become enchanted into lifelessness and stone, sit, and have your soul melted "away, your mind imprisoned, your intellect frozen, your heart changed into "flint, and your bowels of compassion obliterated. Sit, and be as one of us!" But we answer, "No!" though all the Royal Preachers in the universe commanded us, we answer, "No!" Life is not worth having unless we have freedom with it. If we are to be as dolls moved by others, then better not be at all. We will take the full handful of life, and liberty, and consciousness—we will do and say the thing to be done and said, and sit content with the pleasure of knowing that our life has been rightly wrought. And if the big world come with its rebukes and whips, we bid the flogger flog, and the scorner scorn; for with only a little courage, we may smile under the infliction. Let the curse come with all its bitterness, and in all its severity, still it will fall powerless. The ghost story only alarms the weak and superstitious man who believes in ghosts; and he who, using his own reason and experience, does not believe in giants, can boldly knock at any frowning castle-gate without fearing that a Blue Beard will appear. And precisely so with the world's presumed power to render us truly and incurably unhappy. The world

has precisely that amount of power to vex our spirits, and make us miserable, that we, in our folly or cowardice, in our weakness or ignorance, have conceded. If we have solemnly called it in to judge us and our actions, then will it sit as our censor. If we have declared it to be wise, then shall we follow the paths it has marked out. But if, happily, we have been fortunate enough to learn the great secret that the world, that society, that our neighbours are wholly powerless of themselves to make or break us—if we have discovered that they can neither afford us pleasure, nor pain us, but in exact proportion to the authority we have given them, why then all will go well, and we can say to the world, "Scorn on, lash on!" It does not injure us, for they alone feel the smart who have bared their own backs, and who have put a rod into the hand of the smiter. And hence it is that we reject this teaching of the Preacher. He makes the neighbour absolute over us—speaks of him as one who possesses power to vex our spirits, and thus poison our handful in life, whereas we say the neighbour has no power beyond that which, in our folly, or ignorance, or weakness, we have given him. The Preacher teaches us that it is better for us not to quarrel with the world, but take our handful in peace; whereas we say, Yes, quarrel with all the evil, and wrong, and falsehood in the world, and even then enjoy peace with the hands full. There is quite as much for them who fight against the world as for those who swim with the tide, and surrender their liberty of action. The only difference lies in the period of life when the enjoyment comes. They who will not quarrel with the world, but will submit to its injustice, are sure to get on best at first—they can calculate upon a glow of sunshine, but how long does it last? We cannot long be satisfied with the trickster. But they who begin with asserting their own independence, are sure, in the long run, to find that self-respect commands the esteem of all good men.

But the Preacher comes forward with the doctrine of Fatalism, and urges it as an argument against troubling ourselves with the condition of things. I would not be hard upon the author for believing in the doctrine, seeing that in the early days it was quite natural for men to believe in such a theory of the universe, but although not bitter upon the man, I cannot overlook either the untruth or the evil tendency of the doctrines. You all remember that he teaches this in the third chapter, wherein he speaks of there being a time for all things. Generally, the passage is understood as meaning that there are fitting times for all things, times we should choose for them; but that is contrary to the meaning of the author. He means that there is a time fixed for all things, as we learn from the first verse:—"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven; a time to be born, and a time to die." This latter is not determined by ourselves, and the author meant, that of all things, the same should be said—that their time is fixed by God. In the ninth chapter, he says: "I returned, and saw, under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all. For man also knoweth not his time; as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil hour when it falleth suddenly upon them." Other passages of a similar character are easily found, and all alike false to the economy of the universe, and the verities of life. True it is that the rock and the tree all live by law. As the tree falls so shall it lie; but man has a force within him which is absent from the rock, and is not known to the tree. And a wise use of that force gives him the victory. The battle, in the end, is to the strong, and the race is to the swift. It is sad to believe otherwise. Why should we work were it not so? Fools do win bread, and sometimes rise to places of trust and power, but, being fools, they cannot enjoy that which they have won. And if men of understanding do not get riches, what matters? Are no poor men happy? Are all the wealthy happy?

Evidently this Preacher had but a low view of men and things, and if all had shared his sentiments the world would have been in a sad condition at this date. Fortunately there have been higher and braver men, who have set nobler examples and taught loftier truths. What, for instance, can be lower than this:—"Curse

"not the king, nor not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter."* "I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God. Be not hasty to go out of his sight; stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him. Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?"†

That is to say, the king and the noble are not to be cursed, least, peradventure, they should be informed of the matter, when, of course, there would be the danger of punishment, and the pain of its infliction. But if there had been none of those men who cursed both kings and rich men to their faces, much less behind their backs, our civilisation would be quite other than it is. If a whole skin be desired above all things, then it will be prudent to follow the Preacher's advice; but if manhood, freedom, and justice be loved beyond the whole skin, then there cannot be a doubt about the necessity of leaving the Preacher to the littleness and mere selfishness of his methods and proverbs.

But while repudiating the thoroughly selfish nature of this teacher, it must not be overlooked that there are many sentences in his writings which are of great value. As for instance, the following: "When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes? . . . It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. . . . Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this. . . . Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee: For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others." Many similar practical sentences are to be found which appear to have been wedged in rather than to belong to the original work. That some such method of eking out the matter was adopted, is pretty clearly intimated by the following: — "And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs." This refers not to the "Book of Proverbs," but to those proverbs which have been worked into the sections of this discourse. Many of them are at variance with its spirit, and breathe a doctrine much above that of its substance, which is cool, arrogant, and unhealthy. If I desire to give young men a book which should stir them to nobleness and action, this would be the last I should think of placing in their hands, for it is more calculated to make them abandon duty as an useless pursuit, than to inspire them with those resolves which prompt them to imitate the highest, and aspire to unity with the Divine.

* Eccles. x. 20.

† Ibid. viii. 24.



END OF VOLUME V.

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